THE COMMUNIST

. XI JANUARY, 1932 No. 1

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Forward with the deepening of the theory and practice of Marxism-Leninism in the labor movement of the United States!

THE MANAGEMENT.

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To The Study of Lenin and Our Party

By ALEX BITTELMAN

IT is high time that a thorough study be undertaken of the development of Marxism-Leninism in the United States. This is made necessary by many reasons chief among which is the need of strengthening theoretically the membership of the Party and its leading cadres.

With the increase in the volume and complexity of our *practical* everyday tasks, the need for such a *theoretical* study will become more acute. At the same time, the growing leading role of our Party in the class struggle of the American proletariat, and the resulting practical experiences, continually create more of the requisites for a scientific study of the development of Leninism in the United States. Only such a study will bring out fully the role of Lenin in the origin and establishment of our Party.

To speak of Lenin and our Party means, first of all, to trace the effect upon the labor movement in the United States of the struggle against opportunism that was carried on by the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin, approximately since 1903. It was in this historic fight against world opportunism, especially against the opportunists of the Second International, led by the Bolsheviks ever since the Bolshevik group became crystallized in Russia in 1903-04, that the ideological and organizational foundations were created for the eventual formation of the Communist International and for the formation of our Party as the United States section of the Communist International.

Secondly, we would have to trace the influence of the Russian Bolsheviks in the United States upon the development of Marxism-Leninism in the American labor movement. A study of this subject will establish the fact that the Russian Bolsheviks in the United States, who were members of the Socialist and trade union movement of the country, have contributed greatly towards creating the conditions for the split with the reformists and the formation of the Communist Party. This also belongs to the study of Lenin and our Party.

Thirdly, we will have to study those activities of Lenin including those during the late imperialist world war which aimed to establish direct organizational contact with the internationalists and revolu-

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tionary socialists in the United States in order to bring about their separation and split from the opportunists and social-patriots. In undertaking these steps, in the face of the tremendous difficulties created by the capitalist governments during the war for communication between the revolutionary socialists in various countries, Lenin was following out the established orientations of the Bolsheviks since 1903 towards splitting away the revolutionary Marxists from the reformists and opportunists all over the world.

And, fourthly, we would have to study the various decisions of the Communist International and of the Profintern (R.I.L.U.) on the American question. All of these decisions constitute an application of Leninism to the class struggle in the United States, and some of them were made—while Lenin was still alive—under his guidance and with his participation. An essential phase of this angle of the study of Lenin and our Party will be found in the numerous personal interviews and discussions that many American communists had with Lenin on the problems and tasks of our movement.

It is along such lines as the above that we shall have to carry on the study of the development of Marxism-Leninism in the United States and of the role of Lenin in the origin and development of our Party. Such a study will illustrate, on the basis also of American experiences, that the assertion of Slutzky & Co., that Lenin (the Bolsheviks) did not follow the line of splitting with the opportunists of the Second International in the pre-war period—that this assertion is nothing else but Trotzkyist slander against Lenin and Lenin's Party. To allow these smugglers of Trotzkyism to question Lenin's struggle against opportunism and to present the matter as something that requires "further investigation" is to try to transform "an axiom into a problem," is to be guilty of "rotten liberalism," as comrade Stalin shows elsewhere in this issue.

A FEW EPISODES OF 1915

The following proposes to recount a few episodes from the relations of Lenin to the labor movement in the United States during the year 1915. These are taken from Lenin's correspondence with A. Kollontay (the Russian "*Leninsky Sbornik*," No. 2) who, in fall of 1915, was contemplating a trip to the United States. Lenin had seized upon the occasion to establish closer contact with the revolutionary socialists in America. In one of his letters to Kollontay (September, 1915), Lenin writes:

> "It would be very regrettable if your trip to the United States should not materialize. We have built quite a few hopes on this trip also the publication in America of our pamphlet (*Socialism and War*) . . and *the consolidation of the Internationalists*. . . ." (Our emphasis).

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Urged on by Lenin, Kollontay made the trip to the United States, sending off her first letter to Lenin from Milwaukee, dated October 18, 1915. In his reply to this letter, Lenin advises Kollontay to spare no efforts in order to consolidate the revolutionary socialists, the internationalists, on the platform of the Left Zimmerwald group which were led by the Bolsheviks. In doing so Lenin makes some very pointed remarks regarding the political characteristics of various groups and leaders in the Socialist Party.

Regarding the Volkszeitung, Lenin writes (November 9, 1915) that "Grimm has assured me today that they are all Kautskians. Is that correct? I believe that the German pamphlet (*Socialism and War*) might help you to determine the 'strength' of their internationalism." Subsequent events have shown that there was very little strength in the internationalism of the Volkszeitung. For a certain period, the Volkszeitung under Ludwig Lore was pretending to be with the Bolsheviks and with the Communist International, but even then it did not abandon its leanings to Kautsky and Trotzky. The years of the temporary and relative stabilization of capitalism have brought out even more fully the hopeless opportunism of Lore & Co., who became the open organizers of Trotzkyism in the United States for which they were eventually expelled from the Workers (Communist) Party. The essential identity of Trotzkyism and Kautskyism was clearly demonstrated by the opportunism of Lore. The activities of the Right wing renegades (Lovestone) and the Trotzkyist renegades (Cannon) in the present period demonstrate the same truth.

In the same letter to Kollontay, Lenin speaks about Debs. He writes: . .

"What does Eugine Debs represent? At this time he writes revolutionary. Or is he too a rag a la Kautsky?" A strict evaluation of Debs' position during the world war will undoubtedly place him among the centrists, that is, among that variety of opportunism which was represented on a world scale by Kautsky.

Lenin also mentions Hillquit. He says: "That Hillquit will stand with Kautsky and even *to the right of Kautsky*, I never had any doubts, because I have seen him (Hillquit) in Stuttgart (1907) and I have heard how he afterwards defended the prohibition of Asiatic immigration into the United States (an 'internationalist') . . ." For Marx, Lenin, Stalin and the Communist International true proletarian internationalism is the very heart of revolutionary socialism, of communism. That is why the mere fact that Hillquit —a "socialist" and an "internationalist"—was fighting for the exclusion of Asiatic immigration from the United States (Chinese, Japanese, Indians, etc.) was sufficient to expose him as a social-

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reformist who during the war became a social-chauvinist, developing after the war into a social-fascist.

By means of these remarks Lenin was trying to direct Kollontay to those elements in the American socialist and labor movement that were willing to fight for real internationalism, not alone in words but in deeds. The test of real internationalism at that time was the platform of the *lefts* of the Zimmerwald group and around this platform Lenin was aiming to consolidate the revolutionary elements in the labor movement in the United States. Thus Lenin wrote to Kollontay:

> "The Zimmerwald Manifesto itself is insufficient. Kautsky and company are ready to reconcile themselves to it *on condition*: 'not a step farther.' Into this we will *not* go because this is *sheer hypocrisy*. Thus if there are in America people who are afraid even of the Zimmerwald Manifesto then you better drop them, and gather together only those that stand *to the left of the Zimmerwald Manifesto*." (Lenin's emphasis.)

Lenin again repeats his direction to Kollontay to "try everywhere to see the local Bolsheviks (if only for five minutes) to 'refresh' them and to *connect them with us*."

It was at about the same time (November-December, 1915) that Lenin sent his famous letter to the Socialist Propaganda League of America. Unfortunately, only part of it has been preserved. We quote from the Letter as it appeared in the COMMUNIST of January, 1931.

The central point of this letter is Lenin's advice to the revolutionary socialists of the United States to break with the opportunists, to separate from them. Lenin says:

> "We do not preach an alliance with the *present* socialist parties that are dominating the Second International. On the contrary, we insist upon *breaking* with the conciliators. (The English 'conciliators' is not the correct equivalent of the Russian '*soglashately*.' It would be more correct to use the word 'class-collaborators,' or collaborators with the bourgeoisie—A.B.). The war is the best object lesson. The conciliators, their leaders, their most influential papers and magazines in every country, are *in favor* of the war; in other words, they have actually formed an alliance with 'their' national bourgeoisie (middle class, capitalists) against the proletarian masses. You say that there are socialists in America who express themselves in favor of a war of defense. We are convinced that an alliance with such people is criminal. *This* would be an alliance with the national middle class and the capitalists, and a *break* with the international revolutionary working class. *We*, on our part, stand for a break with the nationalist conciliators, for an alliance with the international Marxists-revolutionists, and with the parties of the working class." (Lenin's emphasis.)

In this letter Lenin endorses the stand of the "Socialist Propa-

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ganda League" against craft unions and for industrial unions. At the same time Lenin found it necessary to say that he is in favor of "the most active participation of *all* Party members in the economic struggle and in *all* the trade unions and cooperative organizations of the working class." Lenin emphasizes here the word *all* trade unions, meaning the craft unions dominated by the reformists, Gompers and company, who "represent not the working class but the aristocracy and bureaucracy of the working class." This was especially necessary at that time, when the tendency to boycott the reactionary craft unions of the American Federation of Labor, and the general sectarian drift, were prevalent among the left elements of the labor movement. But this remark of Lenin retains its full force also for the present period. The fact that the class conscious American workers, under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Trade Union Unity League, are building revolutionary industrial unions does not exclude the need for working in the reactionary craft unions of the American Federation of Labor, but, on the contrary, makes such work even more necessary. Why? Because in certain industries (having mass American Federation of Labor unions) and under certain conditions (growing foment among the rank and file) our work in the reactionary unions, *with the policy of independent revolutionary leadership of the economic struggles of the workers*, is proving to be a highly effective weapon for winning the masses away from the reformists *and for organizing them into the industrial unions of the Trade Union Unity League.* The same element of timeliness is contained in the other remark of Lenin which urges "the most active participation of *all* Party members in the economic struggle." This is, in the present period, *especially* relevant. The participation in and leadership of the economic struggle, *through the building of the Party and revolutionary unions in the shops*, is today *the main road* towards developing the revolutionary counter-offensive of the American proletariat under the leadership of our Party and of the T. U. U. L.

In addition to sending the letter to the "Socialist Propaganda League," Lenin wrote to Kollontay to find out more about this group. He says (November 22):

> "I hope you will bend all efforts to find out everything about them and in the greatest possible detail and that you will also try to create out of them (or *also* out of them, or from among some of them) one of the bases of the 'Zimmerwald Left' in America."

Surveying the field for possible allies in the United States for the "Zimmerwald Left," Lenin repeatedly inquires of Kollontay about the Socialist Labor Party (S. L. P.). In a letter dated March

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19, 1916, Lenin asks: "What about the S. L. P.? They are internationalists, aren't they (although with a narrow sectarian flavor)?" Lenin makes similar reference to the S. L. P. in the letter to the "Socialist Propaganda League," in which he says that Marx and Engels "both condemn the sectarian character of the S. L. P." And again in his letter to Kollontay of February, 1917, Lenin makes some very critical observations in connection with the impression he received that "the S. L. P. is throwing out its entire program-minimum."

The Bolsheviks always viewed the question of "program-minimum" in the sense of partial demands and of transitional demands, that is, as a means of organizing the masses—in the course of their daily struggles—for the revolutionary overthrow of the entire present system and for the dictatorship of the proletariat. This constituted a clear line of demarcation between revolutionary socialism and reformism for whom the "program-minimum" was a means of *preventing* the development of the revolution, a weapon for reforming, *i.e.*, strengthening capitalism. On the other hand, this also draws a clear line of demarcation between revolutionary socialism (communism) and "left" sectarianism, also opportunism, which "rejects" all partial demands and transitional slogans. The opportunism and sectarianism of the S. L. P. was covered up with this "ultra-left" rejection of partial demands which had effectively poisoned the Socialist Left Wing of 1918 (which also rejected partial demands) until the experiences of building the Communist Party and the guidance of the Communist International have clarified the American communists on this vital point of revolutionary tactics.

Sectarianism, which covers itself with "left" phrases, is just as foreign to Leninism as is reformism. Both are opportunistic. And while our chief danger in the present period is Right opportunism, whose roots lie in reformism, at the same time we are still suffering from remnants of "left" opportunism (underestimation of the struggle for partial demands, especially the daily economic struggles, etc.) which we must root out in the most determined manner.

A thorough study of the growth and development of Leninism in the United States, which we must undertake as soon as possible, will give us a deeper insight into our present tasks as well as more Bolshevik equipment for the carrying out of these tasks.

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The United Front Tactics in the Lawrence Strike

By WILLIAM WEINSTONE

THE strike of the Lawrence textile workers which was betrayed on the 11th of November by the American Federation of Labor leaders after a militant battle lasting six weeks, was a struggle of first-rate importance for the revolutionary trade union movement. Its lessons bring sharply to the forefront the questions of strike strategy which have been repeatedly discussed in our press, particularly in connection with recent strike battles. The Lawrence strike once again shows that while many of these questions have been settled in general resolutions, they still remain to be clarified and applied in practice.

The strike of the 23,000 Lawrence workers was the biggest battle of textile workers in many years (the largest number of textile workers engaged in a single strike since the war). The Lawrence workers were confronted with a united front of the bosses, police, Citizens' Committee, priests, federal immigration agents, and reactionary labor bureaucrats aided by the socialists and Musteites. Notwithstanding their weakness in organization, the Lawrence workers stood out solidly until the last days of the strike when the blows of the bosses and the police and the treachery of the bureaucrats succeeded in breaking the front and causing a back-to-work movement.

The workers came out against a wage cut on the initiative of the followers of the Trade Union Unity League. The bosses called in their tools, the A. F. of L. leaders, to behead the movement and crush it. These bureaucrats were compelled to resort to radical phraseology and to stretch their demagogy to the utmost and even to give a progressive cover to their strike-breaking activities in order to succeed in breaking the strike. Nevertheless, the workers succeeded in spreading the strike to neighboring cities. They were defeated by the terror, the growing hunger, the treachery of the bureaucrats and the weakness in organization. The workers do not feel themselves defeated.

Despite the initiative which was taken by the National Textile Workers Union and the hard work put in by the followers of the T. U. U. L. and the N. T. W. U., the latter union failed to retain the upper hand in the struggle. It was compelled to bend its

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energies to the utmost in order to achieve the leadership of the masses and while its influence kept growing with the rising militant spirit of the workers, it was unable, however, to isolate the A. F. of L. leaders. Why was this so? We cannot of course discount the effect of the sharp terror let loose by the bosses from the very moment of the strike (arrest of Berkman and Murdock, intimidation by the immigration authorities, etc.), nor the weakness of the union which after the short strike of last January inexcusably abandoned the field and failed to organizationally consolidate itself in the factories. Nor can we underestimate the organizational looseness which was revealed in the failure to establish functioning mill strike committees, to develop local forces and to coordinate the activity so as to establish a strong fighting front against the bosses. No doubt the opportunistic mistakes committed by our union especially at the beginning by not bringing in elements of political struggle in the movements which most sharply expressed itself in giving up the fight against police terror effected the strikes as a whole and deserves special treatment. But the decisive weakness which marked the leadership of the entire struggle consisted in the formal and lifeless application of the united front tactics with which this article is chiefly concerned. The application of the united front tactics as our tactics generally depends especially upon the existing situation, i.-e., the relation of forces between our union and the reactionary union, upon the extent of militancy and experience of the workers in the class struggle, upon the tactics of the bosses, etc.

Let us consider the situation. The masses of workers in Lawrence were unorganized. At the outset of the strike only a small portion of the workers belonged to the A. F. of L. unions. A number of workers were sympathetic with the N. T. W. U. but little N. T. W. U. organization existed. Notwithstanding the great revolutionary traditions of the Lawrence workers, many of them new to the struggle, have come to the front of battle only recently as a result of the crisis and with many illusions carried over from the propaganda of the bourgeoisie. A great part of the workers had their serious doubts about the A. F. of L. leaders, but they were not yet convinced of the ability of the N. T. W. U. to lead victorious struggles and to maintain an organization, particularly since they had failed to carry on organizational work after the last strike. The workers were however ready to struggle against the bosses and to accept militant leadership for a united fight against the powerful bosses' organizations. The offensive of the capitalists created a strong desire for unity among the workers.

As a consequence of these facts the disposition of forces at the beginning of the strike was as follows: The most conscious part of

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the workers with the greatest class experience stood with the revolutionary union, made up the strike committee and came out decisively against the bosses and reactionary bureaucrats. On the other hand the A. F. of L. utilizing the support of the bosses and the government, succeeded in gaining a considerable part of the workers under their influence. They did so by pretending support of the strike, and by using new methods of deceiving the workers such as hypocritically calling for militancy on the picket lines, and by simulating adherence to the policy of setting up rank and file strike committees. Thus there existed in the strike two strike committees—one under the influence of the revolutionary union and another seemingly of rank and file composition but in reality fully dominated by the A. F. of L. officials.

The situation demanded from the National Textile Workers Union that it break down the illusions of the workers under the influence of the A. F. of L., that it convince them that it is capable of giving firm and decisive leadership, and that it stood resolutely for united fight against the ten per cent wage cut, against the offensive and terror of the bosses. But the National Textile Workers Union did not clearly stand out as the fighter for the unity of the workers. They did not clearly put forward the slogan for one strike committee, for one picket line, for one relief committee, etc. The workers did not feel convinced by the slogans and practices of the National Textile Workers Union, that they really favored the united struggle against the bosses. Only in the last days of the strike did the National Textile Workers Union carry through on several occasions the unification of the picket line against the will of the bureaucrats and gained growing support on that account from the workers. The National Textile Workers Union raised in a general way the slogan for unity but such a general presentation no longer suffices. Even the bureaucrats may play around with the slogan of unity in order to deceive the workers. It was necessary to combine word with deed and to develop a furious activity to show that the National Textile Workers Union favors the unity of the workers. The united front organ which was set up remained too narrowly a strike organ of the union and not the united organ of the workers themselves. There was no clear line of demarcation between the united front organization which aimed to embrace the workers of all unions and workers of various political opinions and the N. T. W. U. which contained only a small number of the revolutionary workers. There was no persistent struggle to win away the followers of the A. F. of L. officials and workers who wavered between the A. F. of L. and the N. T. W. U., to bring them into the united front and to do it on the basis of the struggle itself.

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THE LOT VERSUS THE COMMONS

This failure to struggle persistently and stubbornly for the masses and to achieve the united front was graphically represented in the policy pursued with respect to the meetings which took place daily. Barred from meeting halls, the revolutionary N. T. W. U. was compelled to hold its meetings on a lot. The U. T. W. officials, with the aid of the government, secured the Commons in the center of the city. The meetings on the lot attracted several hundred workers; the Commons was attended daily by several thousand of workers. Our comrades remained content with their meetings on the lot, hoping that the number would constantly increase and that the attendance on the Commons would decline. They hoped in time that they would force their way to the right to meet on the Commons. Thus they expected that the "lot" would eventually become a "Commons" and the "Commons" would finally be reduced to a "lot." The leadership of the National Textile Workers Union did not direct its followers to enter the meetings on the Commons and aim to penetrate it with slogans and policies, did not think of ways and means to expose the officials that spoke at these meetings, and thus tear the masses loose from the treacherous leaders.

The harmfulness of this narrow policy, of this failure to *struggle* for the masses, was shown up in an unmistakable way in the last days of the struggle when the leaders of the A. F. of L. deserted the meeting on the Commons. They left the workers leaderless in order to create a stampede back to work. Here was the opportunity to seize the Commons meeting and take over the leadership of the masses and in fact militant workers came to the lot to inform our leadership of the situation. There was a critical twenty minutes when eight thousand workers waited on the Commons for speakers and our comrades remained on the lot. The meeting on the Commons dispersed before our comrades arrived. But this failure to seize the moment was not merely a question of inexcusable slowness in coming to the Commons as some comrades think. It was the fruit of five weeks of sectarian separation from the masses, an expression of the failure to fight stubbornly and by all means to gain the leadership over the masses. Correct and necessary as the holding of independent meetings of the united front committee was, it was necessary to combine the mobilization of the followers of the N. T. W. U. with the work of winning over the workers that stood under the leadership of the A. F. of L.

"OURS" AND "THEIRS"

This separation from the main bulk of the workers who went along half-heartedly with the A. F. of L. leaders expressed crassly

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the narrowness of the united front policy. The workers directly responding to the slogans of the T. U. U. L. and the National Textile Workers Union were looked upon by us as "our workers" and those on the Commons, and picketing under the official captains of the A. F. of L. were "their" workers. The Party comrades did not conceive that these workers really belonged to us, that they were not strongly tied to the organization of the A. F. of L. and that by exposing convincingly not merely denouncing the treachery of the officials of the A. F. of L., it was possible and necessary to win "their workers" and make them "ours." Thus the proposals for united fronts remained formal and lifeless. Decisions to send letters and delegations to locals of the A. F. of L. to form the united front were either not carried out or were done so irresolutely as not to leave any effect. Such proposals would have shown up the opposition of the A. F. of L. officialdom to united action. They would have revealed to the workers more clearly who wish to fight against the bosses with all the strength which the workers possessed and who carry out unity with the bosses. Thus followers of the N. T. W. U. did not consider and apply the necessary means, slogans, maneuvers, to uncover the treachery which was concealed behind radical phrases and maneuvers of the A. F. of L. officialdom. They underestimated the effect of this radical phraseology and did not consider how systematically to expose it.

RELATIONS OF THE UNION TO THE UNITED FRONT

A correct and resolute application of the united front policy was hampered by an unclear understanding of the relations of the union to the united front organs. In some instances there was even the idea that the establishment of the united front strike committee obstructed the building of the union. Consequently there was a fear that one of the tasks of the strike—the building of the Union, would not be achieved. Some comrades saw the task of building the Union in a very formal way and conceived the building of the united front and the establishment of the Union as two opposing tasks instead of a two-fold task. They did not see that the establishment of a united front in the struggle against the bosses was the best weapon for the building of the Union, for attracting the workers on the basis of their experiences to our banners, of having the workers test in action (not in phrases alone) the correctness of the policy of the National Textile Workers Union and its leadership and thus bring the workers to its ranks. In practice, despite the intentions of the comrades, the united front rank and file committee was reduced to an organ of the Union followers and close sympathizers. The united front organ must consist of representatives elected by the

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workers irrespective of the unions to which they belong, and the unorganized workers. *In the united front the members of the N. T. W. U. must be the backbone, must fight for leadership in an organized way and impress their policies upon the united front through the correctness of these policies and through the ability and militancy of the leadership.* This does not exclude independent work of recruiting members into the Union. On the contrary, this presumes the carrying on of such work. But the united front strike committee was led in such a way as to fail to distinguish between the revolutionary Union and the united front of all the worker irrespective of union organization. All appeals to the rank and file workers to join the united front contained simultaneously mechanical appeals to join the National Textile Workers Union, without taking into consideration the specific situation, and thus many workers not ready to join up with the National Textile Workers Union did not see in the united front organ an organ of united struggle of all the workers against the bosses. Accordingly very little effort was made to make the united front committee function in a way corresponding to its tasks and it was smothered under the mechanical control of the National Textile Workers Union apparatus. It is not surprising, therefore, that also little was done to secure representation of the workers of the shops into the united front central strike committee and that feeble work was carried on to build local shop strike committees of a united front character. It is also not surprising that the weaknesses pointed out in connection with the Paterson strike, the failure to develop local forces and push forward rank and file workers as leaders was not carried through.

INDEPENDENT LEADERSHIP OF STRIKE STRUGGLES

The weaknesses here registered must be considered in the light of our policy of independent leadership of strike struggles. The policy of independent leadership put forward by the Comintern and the R. I. L. U. has been proven correct and has withstood the test of struggle. Those who have opposed it—the Lovestoneites and Cannonites—have shown that their conception of the united front and their opposition to the policy of independent leadership means collaboration with the bureaucrats and the carrying on of strike-breaking activities as was demonstrated in the Paterson textile strike and in the needle trades struggle recently. In Paterson they stood completely with the strike-breaker McMahon and in the needle trades they have made one front with the arch reactionaries, Stetsky and Kaufman. Their conception of work in the reformist unions consists in the establishment of one front with the bureaucrats against the revolutionary trade unionists. But the fight

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against the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, Musteites and the renegade co-workers of these strike-breakers is not carried on in the best way if the correct policy of independent leadership is applied mechanically and in a formal way. Some comrades unwittingly carry out the policy of independent leadership as if it means *merely* the formal counterposing of our organizations to those of the A. F. of L. organizations and of our leadership to those of the reactionary leaders.

They think that independent leadership means *merely* independent issuance of leaflets in the name of our Union, calls upon the workers to "fight under the leadership of the National Textile Workers Union against the A. F. of L. leaders." But consider the position of an average worker in Lawrence at the time at the outbreak of the strike reading such an appeal. The revolutionary Union in Lawrence because of a lack of work did not succeed in winning the confidence of the majority of workers. The average worker therefore asks himself: "Why should I fight under the leadership of this weak organization, the A. F. of L. has rotten leaders but still it is stronger and is not subject to so many attacks as the revolutionary union." Consequently not all the workers are ready at the outset to join the union and fight directly under its leadership. But the workers have confidence in their own strength, which they have proved in spontaneously going out in struggle, in streaming out of the factories when the wage cut was announced and carrying on pitched battles with the police at times without leadership. The average worker thinks that he will be able to prevent the betrayal of the A. F. of L. leaders through his rank and file committee even though such a committee stands under the official leadership of the A. F. of L. If the National Textile Workers Union would not only say to the workers: "Unite your strength and join your numbers in an organized way against the bosses, elect your own leadership, put forward militant fighters as leaders who will not betray your struggle," but would direct all its activities to the carrying out of this policy the workers would understand this and would come therefore to accept the policies of the N. T. W. U. and the leadership of the Union. Thus the united front is the best way of bringing the workers into action against the bosses, and provides the broadest basis for winning the workers to the leadership of the revolutionary trade union movement. But such a policy presumes that even where revolutionary unions exist in an industry in which at the same time reformist organizations with mass following exist, that work is carried on inside among the masses in these reactionary unions. The Lawrence and Paterson strikes, the present favorable needle trades situation,

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shows that the road to the building of the revolutionary unions does not lie *simply* in calling upon the workers to directly pass over into the ranks of the revolutionary unions but shows that by flexibly combining the struggle of the revolutionary unions for the daily needs and by broadening these unions on the basis of these struggles with work inside the reformist unions, it is possible to bring over compact masses to the revolutionary unions, to disintegrate by the practice of the united front the influence of the officials.

The building of the revolutionary unions in mining, needle trades, textile, marine, and others, has proven correct, but the building up of these unions must be conducted on the policy of *struggle* by showing to the workers the capacity of the unions to mobilize and fight for the interests of the workers against the bosses, by the application of the united front policy of struggle against the bosses, which is at the same time the main weapon with which to destroy the influence which reactionary leaders still have among workers in these industries.

The weaknesses shown in the strike are connected with weaknesses in the application of the policies of the Eleventh Plenum of the E. C. C. I. and the Thirteenth Plenum of our Party which issued the slogan for the utmost concreteness in slogans and practices, for a careful estimation of the specific situations in which we work. Our comrades did not fully consider the peculiarities of the Lawrence situation.

The treachery of the A. F. of L. has convinced larger numbers of workers that had illusions in the course of the strike that it is necessary to fight under the banner of the N. T. W. U. Our comrades must now avoid the mistakes made after the January strike of abandoning the field. They must recruit workers that are convinced of the necessity of revolutionary leadership to the N. T. W. U. The N. T. W. U. will build itself up and will consolidate the influence it has gained, will build a mass union on condition that it applies the united front in the shops to struggle for the shop grievances, to fight against blacklisting, to fight for the release of the arrested workers and for the discharge of cases still pending, for unemployment relief and insurance, fight the further wage cuts which will take place, and develops a stubborn struggle against the offensive of the capitalists in all forms.

The lessons of the Lawrence strike following close upon the heels of the Paterson strike, prove the necessity for conducting a wider discussion in the ranks of the Party on strike strategy and of bringing the full lessons of the strategy and forms of organization necessary to build up the revolutionary trade union movement on the basis of the united front against offensive of the capitalist class.

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The Struggle Against Unemployment and the Communist Way Out of the Crisis

By BILL DUNNE

> "However the old capital likewise arrives in due time at the moment when it must renew its head and limbs, when it casts its old skin and is likewise born again in its perfected industrial form, *in which a small quantity of labor suffices to set in motion a larger quantity of machinery and raw materials.* The absolute decrease of the demand for labor necessarily following therefrom will be so much greater, the more these capitals going through the process of rejuvenation *have accumulated in masses by means of the movement of centralization.*"
>
> "On the one hand, therefore, the additional capital formed in the course of accumulation *attracts fewer and fewer laborers in proportion to its magnitude.* On the other hand, the old capital periodically reproduces with change of composition, *repels more and more of the laborers formerly employed by it* . . . an apparently absolute increase of the laboring population, an increase always moving more rapidly than that of the variable capital or the means of employment. But in fact, *it is capitalistic accumulation that constantly produces, and produces in exact ratio of its own energy and extent, a relatively redundant population of laborers, i. e. a population of greater extent that suffices for the average needs of the self-expansion of capital, and therefore a surplus population.*" (*Capital*, Vol. I, Chapter 25, pages 689-91. Our emphasis.)

THE moral prestige of American capitalism is being seriously undermined. With 12,000,000 unemployed in the third winter of the crisis and a progressive accumulation of mass misery, the failure of American capitalism to stop its downward plunge and relieve the acute distress of the masses is having the most profound effect upon class relationships.

The morale of the capitalist leaders is low. The Hoover message, which the deepening of the crisis, nationally and internationally, forced being dictated in pessimistic terms, in sharp contrast to the previous outbursts of optimism, struck Wall Street like a bucket of ice-cold water. Stocks dropped from 3 to 8 points and new low levels of production—steel at 20 per cent of capacity—were revealed in the stock market news. The U. S. Treasury has a deficit of more than three billion dollars. Taxes on articles of

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mass consumption are proposed on the eve of a presidential campaign.

Wage cuts, farm boards, banking and railway pools, inflationary methods such as the expansion of the Federal Reserve credits, increases in railway freight rates, moratorium for German war debts, have not resulted in solving the question of the market, have not alleviated the crisis. There are no signs of a revival of production. The giant mergers of banks, industries and railways, carried out during the crisis, and as a means of solving the crisis, have added to mass unemployment.

Stocks of goods have not decreased but have actually increased during the crisis and every day the contrast between these vast accumulations of commodities and the growing misery of hungry, cold and shelterless workers sharpens.

The "high Amercan standard of living" theory, that compost heap where bred ninety per cent of the demagogic proposals and perspectives of the capitalist economists and the agents of capitalism in the leadership of the American Federation of Labor, has been thrown into the junkpile of American capitalism with other antiques of the boom period like "permanent prosperity."

There is no room for further substantial and profitable expansion of the basic industries in the United States, either on the basis of increase of population at home or of expansion of the foreign and domestic market, except by imperialist war, unless the capitalist class is able to carry through rapidly such a further attack on the social and living standards of the working population that expansion can be made profitable by sharply increased exploitation.

But this will produce, with the extension of the influence and activity of our Party, mass struggles of a political character and of a scope hitherto unheard of in the United States. Permanent mass unemployment is here in the United States to stay. The mass response to the National Hunger March, and the frantic efforts of the Hoover administration and the capitalist press to counteract its effect on the working class, show that the revolutionary battalions of the American proletariat are in the process of formation. We must train them more systematically for the revolutionary struggle.

The Eleventh Plenum of the Executive of the Communist International placed the winning of the majority of the working class as the major and *immediate* task of its sections in this period. Our Party has made some progress in this respect but has been handicapped by slowness in estimating correctly the extent of and the terrible damage done capitalism by the world economic crisis, and by a similar slowness in realizing the power of the struggle by the tremendous lever of the fight for workers' unemployment insurance

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and immediate relief at the expense of the capitalists and their government.

Not only have we been slow in bringing forward the correct immediate demands but we have likewise, in the *Daily Worker* and elsewhere, been lax in indicting the capitalist system as a whole and in explaining and emphasizing the revolutionary implications of the crisis and the Communist way out of the crisis, i. e. the organization of the working class and its allies for the overthrow of capitalism and the conquest of power.

The directives sent to the districts on December 7 correctly emphasize these major questions:

> "The National Hunger March has shown the acute needs of the unemployed masses. It has revealed the great possibilities for the organization of the unemployed and the readiness of the unemployed to assemble under our banner. It has been one of the greatest mobilizations of workers carried out under the leadership of the Party. At the same time a considerable number of weaknesses have been revealed which will be discussed in a special resolution. In this circular we must emphasize the absolute need of taking all measures to ensure the march does not result in slackening activities but that it really means an intensification of the organizational work of organizing the unemployed into committees and developing the movement to a higher stage of organization and political struggle."

The demand for unemployment insurance at full wages directed against capitalist government is not alone sufficient to bring out the revolutionary aspects and possibilities of the crisis. It is necessary to tell, not only the unemployed millions, but especially is it necessary to tell the employed workers, what the Hoover program means for the whole American working class. The wholesale reductions in wage rates, the huge cut in the income of the working class by complete unemployment, the almost universal character of part time work with its corresponding decrease in wages, the increased exploitation brought about by mechanical rationalization methods and the still more horrible effects of the speed-up induced by the unprecedented competition for a livelihood—are not in themselves sufficient to win the majority of the working class for the Communist way out of the crisis.

The wide radicalization of the working class induced by these objective factors must be bulwarked systematically by the Marxist-Leninist explanation of the crisis and of the goal of the capitalist offensive.

As a result of the special conditions which surrounded the development of American capitalism (free land, a great shortage of wage labor, the absence of a large aboriginal population for enslavement, the possession of practically all the natural resources necessary for

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capitalist industry, etc.), and as a result of the expansion of capitalism during the post-war period up to 1929, there have been created in the ranks of the working class powerful illusions concerning American capitalist society. If we recall that these illusions found strong expression in our Party at one time, and even in the leadership of the Communist International, it becomes clear that extraordinary efforts are needed on the part of the C. P. U. S. A. to combat these illusions, with the powerful aid of the crisis; we must be able to reply to and expose all the proposals for liquidating the crisis in any other way than than of the Communist program—and be able to organize the working class against proposals and programs whose sole purpose it is to perpetuate illusions among the working class and force it to accept the capitalist solution—increased robbery, poverty, pauperism and war.

Such phrases as the "sturdy individualism" of the American workers—with which Hoover urges the hungry millions of the unemployed to feed themselves—the "preservation of American institutions," etc., represent the efforts of the capitalist class and its hangers-on to perpetuate among workers the illusions which arose out of the special conditions of American capitalism's rise to world domination.

Of the *early* period of American capitalism, Marx wrote:

> ". . . the law of supply and demand favors the workingman, hence the relatively high standard of wages in the United States. Capital may there try its utmost. It cannot prevent the labor market from being continuously emptied by the continuous conversion of wage laborers into independent, self-sustaining peasants. The position of wage laborer is for a very large part of the American people but a probationary state, which they are sure to leave within a longer or shorter term."

It was this state of affairs which made it necessary for American capitalism to encourage the immigration of millions of foreign-born workers—against whom, and their descendants, capitalism now organized a nationwide persecution and suppression through Hoover, Doak and their government.

This policy alone is enough to show that an entire change has taken place, that there is now an enormous surplus of workers whose conditions capitalism makes steadily worse.

But the illusions of the earlier period still persist, are obstacles in the way of revolutionary development, and a barricade from behind touches to its work of destruction of the so-called American standard of the workers.

We must, and especially in connection with the struggle for unemployment insurance, destroy these illusions and thereby strengthen and raise the political level of the whole struggle.

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The cynical and brutal resistance of the capitalist class to workers unemployment insurance at the expense of the capitalists is explained by the fact that this demand, even more than the fight against wage cuts, runs counter to the main line of the Hoover-Wall Street program. Workers' unemployment insurance would represent a general rise in the income of the working class, and this can come only from the decreased profits resulting from the tremendous decrease in surplus value because of the great curtailment of production and the consequent withdrawal of millions of workers from the productive process.

American capitalism is now engaged in putting the finishing touches to its work of destruction of the so-called American standard of living—it is destroying one component of the value of American labor power and sharply reducing the other. Marx says:

> "But there are some peculiar features which distinguish the value of the laboring power, or the value of labor, from the value of all other commodities. The value of the laboring power is formed by two elements—the one merely physical, *the other historical or social.* Its ultimate limit is determined by the physical element, that is to say, to maintain and reproduce itself, to perpetuate its physical existence, the working class must receive the necessaries absolutely indispensable for living and multiplying. The value of those indispensable necessities forms, therefore, the ultimate limit of the value of labor."

The reduction of the physical element has been proceeding steadily by rationalization since the depression of 1921. Since 1929 the reduction has taken place at great speed by open wage cuts, part-time work, and the creation of the huge army of unemployed.

American capitalism no longer needs as many millions of workers in production as before. Markets have narrowed, international competition is far keener, the Soviet Union and its 160,000,000 population have been removed from the field of exploitation. American capitalism proceeds in the most brutal and cynical manner to the reduction of the living standards of the working class along the whole line—in order to save itself. In the words of Marx, "A quick succession of unhealthy and shortlived generations will keep the labor market as well supplied as a series of vigorous and long-lived generations."

American capitalism encountered a certain contradiction in carrying through the offensive. It had to maintain the illusions regarding the "American standard" up to a certain point and at the same time to reduce as far as possible the second element of the value of labor power.

> "Besides this mere physical element," says Marx, "the value of labor is in every country determined by a *traditional standard of life.*

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> It is not merely physical life, but it is the satisfaction of certain wants springing from the social conditions in which people are placed and reared up. The English standard of life may be reduced to the Irish standard; the standard of life of a German peasant to that of a Livonian peasant. . . . The historical or social element, entering into the value of labor, may be expanded, or contracted, or altogether extinguished, so that nothing remains but *the physical limit.*"

This is the objective of the capitalist offensive popularly called the Hoover Hunger program: To destroy the "traditional standard" and to reduce the physical element of the value of American labor power to the minimum.

Considering the meagre charity donations and stingy public appropriations for unemployment relief, it is not hard to make the comparison between the American capitalist program of today and that of the "honest English farmers" of the early nineteenth century, referred to by Marx, who "depressed the wages of the agricultural laborers even beneath that *mere physical minimum,* but made up by Poor Laws the remainder necessary for the physical perpetuation of the race."

"This," says Marx, "was a glorious way to convert the wage laborer into a slave, and Shakespeare's proud yeoman into a pauper."

It is also the way in which the American ruling class is converting the "high American standard of living" into a pauper standard, since it refuses so far, in the third winter of the crisis, to make even such provisions for the maintenance of the 12,000,000 unemployed and their dependents as was made by the miserable English against the workingman." (*Value, Price and Profit.*)

The crisis has brought clearly into view some of the tendencies which the continued expansion of American capitalism helped to conceal, especially the "general tendency of capitalist production . . . to sink the average standard of wages, or to push the value of labor more or less to its minimum limit . . . the very development of modern industry must progressively turn the scale in favor of the capitalist against the workingman."

Marx in these terse words long ago disposed of the "high wage and mass production" theory, of machine processes and rationalization as a whole as a means by which the position of the working class was improved in capitalist society.

These elementary facts we must make clear to the American working class.

It is no mere coincidence without political importance that the fiercest battles and the most open mobilization of police and military forces against workers have in the period of the crisis occurred when workers have resisted an attack on their wages (the coal miners' strike in western Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia, and Ken-

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tucky, the Lawrence textile workers' strike, the strike of the Imperial Valley agricultural workers, the struggle of the Alabama Negro share-croppers, etc.), and especially in the struggles of unemployed workers from the smallest demonstration against evictions and for immediate relief up to the National Hunger March and the mass demand for unemployment insurance.

American capitalism is in a bad way; production continues to drop, markets to shrink. Its credit structure is creaking at every joint. Its moral prestige over the working class is badly damaged and its shibboleths are more and more persistently questioned by increasingly large numbers of workers.

American capitalism is fearful and nervous. It is unable even to carry through the famous recommendations of de Mandeville, quoted by Marx:

> "... it is in the interest of all rich nations, that *the greatest part of the poor should never be idle*, and yet continually spend all they get. . . . To make society happy and people easier under the meanest circumstances, *it is requisite that great numbers of them should be ignorant as well as poor;* knowledge both enlarges and multiplies our desires, and the fewer things man wishes for, the more easily his necessities may be supplied."

But the American working class has developed with a tradition of a relatively high living standard. It is a literate working class. The exigencies of American capitalism compel it to attempt with all possible speed to reduce the technically high American standard to below the European level.

It is of considerable importance in this respect to note the recent utterance of Odgen L. Mills, Under-Secretary of the Treasury, perhaps the best expression to date of the nervousness and fear of the future with which American capitalism proceeds with the vicious attack on the living and social standards of the American masses:

> "I want to score the rumor-mongers who are spreading fear and apprehension throughout the community. This is a time of war—a war against deflation and fear, and in time of war you put a bullet through a soldier who deserts. Well, we can give a mighty cold reception to the man who comes spreading an idle rumor at a time like this.
>
> "One of the wholesomest things we could do would be to set up a series of nice little pillories on the steps of the Sub-Treasury with signs indicating a welcome reception to all scandal and rumor mongers." (New York *Herald-Tribune*, Dec. 15.)

To what does Andrew Mellon's right hand man refer? To stock market "rumors" and what is called "bear talk?" By no means. He meant the exposure of capitalism and its prospects which are made by our Party—the revolutionary proletarian analysis of the crisis. Mills' remarks are the contribution of the Treasury Depart-

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ment to the call for deportation, intimidation and persecution of foreign-born workers issued by Hoover and Doak, the demand of capitalist spokesmen like Fish for the extension of suppressive laws directed at the Communists and the whole working class.

But American capitalism is so strong, in spite of the terrific blows of the world crisis, and the Communist Party is so weak, say the "liberals," that there is no reason for such fears and no need for such drastic measures against the working class. But the capitalist spokesmen are at least true to their class and express the interests of their class—no matter how stupid some of their proposals may be. Liberalism, of course, would like more clever rulers than the Hoovers and Mellons.

They overlook one important fact, however, they, like Kautsky, as Lenin pointed out, have "forgotten" one of the basic features of capitalist democracy: "namely, that the protection of minorities is extended by the ruling party in a bourgeois democracy only to the other *bourgeois* parties, while on all serious, fundamental issues, the working class gets, instead of the "protection of minorities," martial law and pogroms. *The more developed democracy is, the nearer at hand is the danger of a pogrom or civil war in connection with any profound political divergence which threatens the existence of the bourgeoisie.*"

> "This 'law' of bourgeois democracy the learned Mr. Kautsky could have studied in connection with the Dreyfus affair in the republic of France, with the lynching of Negroes and internationalists in the democratic republic of America, with the conflicts between Ireland and Ulster in democratic England, with the hunting down of the Bolsheviks and the organization of pogroms against them in July, 1917, in the democratic republic of Russia." (Lenin, *The Proletarian Revolution*, page 23.)

Lenin continues, and this quotation is of especial value for us in this period in estimating the possibilities and determining our tasks:

> "... the more democracy is developed, the more do the bourgeois parliaments fall under the control of the stock exchange and the banks.... At every step in the most democratic bourgeois states, the oppressed masses come across the crying contradiction between the *formal* equality proclaimed by the democracy of the capitalists, and the thousand and one de facto limitations and restrictions which make the proletarians wage *slaves*. It is this contradiction which pins the eyes of the masses to the rottenness, hypocricy and mendacity of capitalism. It is this contradiction which the agitators and propagandists . . . are constantly showing up to the masses in order to prepare them for the revolution." (*The Proletarian Revolution.*)

The National Hunger March coinciding with the opening of Congress focused the attention of hundreds of thousands of work-

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ers upon this piece of capitalist government machinery. The contrast between the hunger program of capitalism and the immediate program of the Communists was clearly drawn. The class alignments stood forth in sharp relief. It is now necessary to show that the Hoover Hunger Program is the program of "the stock exchange and the banks"—that the Hoover politics and the politics of Congress are the politics of the House of Morgan.

It is now more than ever necessary to propagate the revolutionary way out of the crisis, to show the historic basis of the Communist program, both in the struggle for immediate partial demands and for the replacement of the dictatorship of capitalism by the proletarian dictatorship headed by the Communist Party.

We must make far more use of the elementary Marxist-Leninist classics in our popular literatre, especially in connection with the struggle for workers' unemployment insurance, since here it is possible for some reformist conceptions to creep in and add to the confusion that still prevails among large sections of the working class. We must be able to explain clearly the reasons why only in the Soviet Union has it been possible to abolish unemployment and its attendant miseries and at the same time show the need for the most determined struggle against every sector of the capitalist offensive.

Whatever the future course of the present crisis, and there is not now the faintest sign of improvement, but on the contrary, a steady and rapid downward trend, the "high American standard of living" is gone forever, barring a brief period of war prosperity in which the plentitude of bread will be exceeded by the rivers of workers' blood.

> "Such being the tendency of things in this system," said Marx, "is this saying that the working class ought to renounce their resistance against the encroachment of capital, and abandon attempts at making the best of occasional chances of their temporary improvement? If they did, they would be degraded to one level mass of broken wretches past salvation.... By cowardly giving way in their every-day conflict with capital, they would certainly disqualify themselves for the initiating of any larger movement."

It is precisely against the combined demagogy and sabotage of the American Federation of Labor leaders, "progressives," liberals, socialists, and Musteites, all of whom say in various words the same thing to the workers, *i.e.*, "wait a while and when things get better there will be fairer prospects of improving conditions," that, in addition to the exposure of capitalism and its "remedies" in connection with the crisis, we must direct a more accurate and consistent fire.

Hand in hand with the drive against the living standards of

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toiling industrial and agrarian population goes the attack upon their "legal" rights, both by the courts and semi-official bodies, fascist and gangster bands in the pay of capitalism. The limitless cruelty and bloodthirstiness of these capitalist agencies in this crisis period is to be partially measured by the murder of more than seventy-five Negroes since last August and the increasing ferocity of the southern courts.

Mass unemployment, wage cuts, refusal to establish workers' unemployment insurance, the increase of pauperism, sickness and suicides—all results of the breakdown of capitalism and the capitalist offensive, are accompanied by wider and more intensive measures of political oppression.

Our fight for unemployment insurance, employment on public works at union wages, against wage cuts, against evictions, the turning over of all war funds for unemployment relief, etc., that is the fight against the daily encroachments of capitalism would be one-sided if we neglected the most stubborn struggle for the maintenance and extension of all legal rights.

The steadfast propagating of the Communist way out of the crisis, the struggle against terrorism and suppression, determined battles at every point against the capitalist offensive, will in this historic period bring us much more rapidly than ever before toward the completion of our major task—the winning of the majority of the working class for the struggle for proletarian power.

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Some Lessons of the Last Miners' Strike

By S. WILLNER, *New York*

I

THE first strike wave against wage cuts in the mining industry is, generally speaking, at an end. More than 40,000 miners in Kentucky, Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia fought for months with the greatest self-sacrifice. The strike was conducted against wage cuts, against the infamous working conditions which generally prevail in mining, and for wage increases. The strikes ended without apparent material successes for the miners. The fighters were not yet strong enough to put through their demands. Insufficient organization and preparation of their fighting front, lack of strike relief, prevented them from breaking the united terror of the employers, government and social-fascists, from making their deceitful and confusing maneuvers ineffective, and from achieving material successes. It is, however, certain that the strikes mitigated the intensity of the wage cutting offensive in the mining industry at least temporarily. In districts where it was possible for the United Mine Workers Union to hold the miners back from the struggle, wages have already been cut to 24 cents a ton. In the districts where the miners fought under the leadership of the National Miners Union, more than 30 cents per ton is still being paid.

The strike resulted, furthermore, in the deepening of the class consciousness of the miners, in an enlargement of their experiences of struggle and to an improvement of their organization. With a correct evaluation and general application of the lessons of the strike, the entire revolutionary trade union movement of the United States will benefit greatly. The miners' strikes were, furthermore, a signal for hundreds of thousands of workers in other industries to be on guard and to begin the preparation for their own struggles against wage cuts. The strikes had the effect of mobilizing and activizing, gave an impetus to the strikes of the textile workers and the growing movement in the steel industry.

The miners' strikes began about two years after the so-called Hoover Plan "for overcoming the economic crisis in the United States" was made public. The Hoover Plan proposed certain economic measures to attain this goal. Its most important feature was, however, the appeal to the employers to avoid all wage cuts,

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in order to maintain mass purchasing power in the country and thus to assure the internal market for the products of industry and agriculture.

The employers agreed to the Hoover Plan and expressly promised to forego all wage cuts, until the economic situation should have taken a favorable turn. The promise was hailed by the leaders of the American Federation of Labor as the guarantee of the speedy return of prosperity. The great majority of the workers believed in the Hoover Plan, in the promises of the employers, and in the demagogic statements of the American Federation of Labor. They thus became for years the victims of the grandiose swindle that the government put through together with the big industrialists, bankers and American Federation of Labor fakers to mislead the workers.

The Hoover Plan was nothing more than a skilfully fashioned weapon for the lowering of the living standards of the masses without friction. The first step to this end was the introduction of the so-called "stagger system." It was carried out with the application of such "humane" phrases as "no lay-offs," "assured livelihood for every worker in spite of the economic crisis." It threw upon the shoulders of the working masses as a whole the terrific burden of unemployment, by reducing the income of the individual worker from 30 to 60 per cent. At the same time, the stagger system forced the individual worker to constantly greater effort in order to protect himself and his family from starvation, and in this way resulted in a great sharpening of the competitive struggle in the ranks of his own class.

Mr. Hoover and the masters of industry and of the banks already were aware of the only possible capitalist way to temporarily mitigate the economic crisis in the United States when they worked out the Hoover Plan. They knew that this goal could be attained only through the capture of new foreign markets for the products of American industry and the capture of new opportunities for the investment of accumulated American capital. They knew that every step towards the attainment of this goal must inevitably lead to the sharpening of the class war between capital and labor, and to new imperialist wars.

Furthermore, they knew very well that the immediate prerequisite for the capture of new positions upon the world market by American imperialism, is the lowering of the living standards of the American workers. The employers worsened the living condition of the working masses, as we pointed out, by applying the stagger system. The application of this plan was at the same time designed to hinder the struggle of the workers for wage increases, for unemployment relief and social insurance, and against

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wage cuts, and to render the trade union organization impotent. A starving, disintegrated working class, with its own ranks split, was the aim of the Hoover Plan. With such a working class the government and the employers hoped to be able to bring about most surely a temporary mitigation of the economic crisis by new rationalization, by throwing new hundreds of thousands out of the factories, by general direct wage cutting.

When the stagger system could no longer do the job alone the employers scrapped the phrase "high wages maintain the buying power of the internal market; no wage cuts in the interest of a swift end to the economic crisis," and began an open, brutal, direct wage cutting offensive.

In the basic industries the miners were the first victims of this new wage cutting offensive. The employers counted on a quick and certain victory on this front. The miners live in such miserable circumstances that, according to capitalist ideas, no serious resistance was to be expected from them. The employers hoped that in case of a strike, hunger would drive the workers back into the pits after a few days.

The attempt of the employers to reduce wages further by direct cuts, however, swiftly smashed the belief in the Hoover Plan among the miners. Consequently, the attack of the employers met with the most determined resistance from the workers. The miners showed the employers that their reckoning had been wrong. They gave to all an example of the fact that the toiling masses—employed and unemployed—are putting themselves on guard against attempts still further to worsen their miserable living conditions. They showed by deeds that the working masses are at last passing to counter-offensive and will take up the struggle for their own demands. The local struggles in the mining districts constantly flaring up anew after the miners' strikes, the strikes in the textile and food industries, the developments in the steel industry, the mass demonstrations and active struggle of the unemployed are still further serious proofs of this. The next few months will be a period of great mass struggles of the American working class for their demands—against wage cuts, for unemployment relief and relief for part-time workers—provided the working masses find in the Communist Party and in the revolutionary trade unions an energetic, conscious leadership, which knows how to organize and to lead these struggles by applying a real united front policy.

II

There is no doubt of the fact that the Communist Party and the revolutionary trade unions will be the organizers and leaders of the coming mass struggles in the United States. The Commu-

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nist Party of the United States alone is the class Party of the American proletariat. The revolutionary trade unions alone are the class organizations of the American workers for the organization and leadership of their struggle against the lowering of their living standards. The Communist Party of the United States and the revolutionary trade unions will, however, fulfill their duties to the proletarian class the more effectively if the Party evaluates the lessons and experiences of the miners' and textile workers' strikes, of the unemployed movements, etc., with the greatest conscientiousness and makes them the common property of the entire membership and of the workers in general; if, regardless of the successes which have been achieved, it lays before the workers, with self-critical frankness, the political, organizational and tactical mistakes and shortcomings and thus clears the way for swiftly overcoming them.

The preparation for and the development of the miners' strikes prove completely the correctness of the decisions of the last Plenum of the Comintern, of the Fourth and Fifth Congresses of the Red International of Labor Unions, on the perspectives and tasks of the revolutionary trade union movement in America.

What is the central point of these decisions? There was raised in them above all the unconditional necessity of the organization of mass strikes against wage cuts, of mass actions for unemployment relief. It was pointed out that in the course of the economic crisis of American imperialism, there would develop at the same time favorable objective possibilities for the organization of such struggles. The miners' strikes proved that these favorable objective conditions for the organization of mass strikes and unemployed actions are to a great extent already at hand. They were an example of the extent to which the illusions about prosperity and the Hoover Plan have already been and are being still further destroyed among the proletarian masses by the terrible results of the economic crisis.

In the aforementioned decisions of the Comintern and of the Red International of Labor Unions it is sharply emphasized that the prerequisite for the organization and breaking out of mass strikes in time of deep economic crisis is the linking up of the struggles of the unemployed with the struggles of the employed. The experiences in the course of the miners' strikes show what an active factor fighting unemployed workers are when united with the employed for the mobilization of factory workers, for the starting and carrying out of the strike struggles. The joint activity of the unemployed in the strike achieved the greatest political effects against the employers and the government. It insured the stability of the struggle for many weeks.

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The decisions state further that with correct policy and tactics, and with the application of the organizational principles of the Comintern and of the R. I. L. U. in the coming mass struggles, revolutionary mass trade unions will arise and the Communist Party will develop into a mass Party. The miners' strikes were a shining example of the correctness of this conception. The strikes were led and brought to a conclusion by the National Miners Union in spite of the greatest difficulties, with notably heightened morale and organizational successes. Before the strike the National Miners Union had about 100 dues-paying members in the Pennsylvania District. In the course of the strike the N. M. U. developed with the greatest rapidity. Its authority grew daily. Its influence extended to other mining districts (Kentucky, Illinois, West Virginia, Eastern Ohio). About 25,000 miners joined the N. M. U. in the course of the strike. Thus the N. M. U., through the active determined leadership of the strike, laid the basis for a revolutionary mass union of the American miners. Although it was not possible through the strike to make immediate material gains for the miners, they remained loyal to the N. M. U. after the strike and pressed forward to the political and organizational strengthening of their organization.

The Party very substantially strengthened its ranks in the course of the strike. About 1,000 miners joined the Party. Even during the strike these new members were organized into local groups, leading committees of the group were elected, and a systematic training of the new members was begun. The Party achieved very notable successes in this work, making it possible to utilize the new Party organizations for the organization of the anti-war demonstrations on August First and for the preparations for the municipal election campaigns. The anti-war demonstrations in the strike regions were among the most successful in the United States. For the first time it was possible for the Party to appear with its own candidates in the municipal elections in the strike areas. The first Communist member of a municipal council was elected there. It depends upon the present and future political and organizational work of the Party to what extent these new workers who have come into the revolutionary movement are retained in the Party and in the National Miners Union and develop into active, diligent members.

Finally, it was pointed out in the decisions that the Party and the revolutionary trade unions in America as elsewhere can be built up only in the sharpest political struggle against the social-fascist and reformist betrayers of the workers and against the bourgeois ideology which they have spread among the workers. The miners' strikes under revolutionary leadership forced the employers, the

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government and the social-fascist miners' organization allied with them (the United Mine Workers of America) to resort simultaneously to maneuvers calculated to confuse the issues and to ruthless measures of terror against the fighting workers. In order to strengthen their ability to maneuver, the government, together with the employers, attempted to reconstruct the U. M. W. of A., which had lost its membership in Western Pennsylvania as a result of its betrayal during the strike of 1929, carried on under its leadership. With its help the united fighting front of the miners was to be crushed and the growing influence of the N. M. U. among the miners was to be destroyed. In Kentucky, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia the employers upheld the stability of the United Mine Workers with police. They organized assassinations of the leaders of the N. M. U. and arrested hundreds of revolutionary miners. In Western Pennsylvania twenty-one members of the National Miners Union were sentenced to more than fifty years in the workhouse upon the basis of an alleged "disturbance of the meeting of the United Mine Workers in Cannonsburg." This proves how valuable the U. M. W. of A. is to the government and to the employers.

Further, there manifested itself in connection with the general radicalization of the masses of miners a greater activity of the so-called Muste group in the mining districts (Southern Virginia, Illinois, etc.). This group succeeded with the application of revolutionary phrases in utilizing the favorable situation and extending their influence among sections of the miners. The Socialist party also attempted to force its way into the strike area under the pretext of organizing strike relief. All this proves the necessity of the sharpest political struggle against social-fascism and reformism in the mines and in the organizations of the U. M. W. of A. and of the Musteites, by the application of a correct united front tactic.

The work of the Party and of the N. M. U. for the preparation and leadership of the miners' strikes was a serious attempt to apply in practice the decisions of the Fifth World Congress of the R. I. L. U. and the various decisions and instructions of the Comintern. As a result the general line of the political and organizational work carried on during the strike was correct; also the tactical measures that were applied. A self-critical examination of the activity of the Party and of the N. M. U. for the organization and leadership of the strikes is limited therefore to the answer to the question: To what extent was the line of the Comintern and of the R. I. L. U. applied and what errors and defects appeared in the carrying out of this line? In the following sections we shall attempt to give an answer to this question through a criti-

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cal examination of the work of the Party district in Pennsylvania in the organizing and leading of the West Pennsylvania strike.

III

The general line which the Party maintained or developed in the preparation, initiation and carrying through of the miners' strikes in Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and West Virginia, consisted of the following:

The Party mobilized the unemployed at several concentration points upon the basis of local demands. It succeeded in raising demands which were accepted by the workers as correct and necessary. It drew into this movement a portion of the part-time workers. After the beginning of the direct wage cutting offensive local strikes broke out in these areas. The Party spread these strikes on a district scale. After about two weeks over 5,000 miners of the Western Pennsylvania district were on strike. The Party applied a correct united front policy in its work in Western Pennsylvania. It successfully called upon the strikers to elect a united front strike committee upon a local, section and district scale. Through the central strike committee it notified the employers what the district demands of the strikers were and organized a wide campaign for strike relief. The Party proposed to the strikers an organized retreat, after the strike situation proved that there was no longer any immediate possibility of putting over the district demands.

Furthermore, the Party utilized the strike movement to raise the class consciousness of the masses. In order to strengthen the strike front and at the same time the general movement it answered the maneuvers, which were designed to create confusion, and the measures of terror of the bosses, the government and the United Mine Workers of America fakers, by a mass propaganda for political demands, against the police, against the sell-out agreements between the bosses and the U. M. W. of A. fakers, against arbitration negotiations, etc. To carry out these demands they organized various effective mass actions. The hunger marches to Washington, Pennsylvania and Pittsburgh, the measures to smash the injunction gotten out by the Butler Coal Company for the Wildwood Mine, the mass demonstrations of the strikers and unemployed at the seat of government in Harrisburg and Washington, the National Miners' Conference, the anti-war demonstrations in the strike area on August First, were successful active measures for the politicalization of the strike.

The Party further attempted to make understandable to the strikers the role of the C. P. U. S. A., its aims and methods of struggle. It undertook some political steps to fight the Socialist party. From the organizational point of view the Party attempted

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to put the strike apparatus on a functioning basis, to build up the National Miners Union, to strengthen its own ranks by the taking in of new members, and to develop new cadres of functionaries. Successful measures were also carried out to make a united front between white and colored workers, between young workers and adults. The colored workers took the most active part in the strike committees, relief committees, etc. One hundred and seventy Negro workers participated in the National Miners' Conference. The Party also knew how to draw the miners' wives and children into active work in the strike movement. The mass participation of the miners' wives on the picket lines and hunger marches had a great effect. This led the government to an express prohibition of the participation of women on the picket lines and in demonstrations to bring out new mines.

What errors and shortcomings were shown in the application of this political line? The central political error consisted in an underestimation by large sections of the Party in the Pittsburgh district of the radicalization process and of the readiness to struggle on the part of the masses of miners. In its work of preparing and carrying out the miners' strikes, the Party remained far behind the masses. Its tempo of work could not reach the tempo of the radicalization process. It appeared before the workers, who were calling for organization and leadership of their struggle, with strong remnants of "prosperity" ideology. It believed too little in the desire to struggle, in the fighting energy and creative power of the masses. It took too little into account the fact that two years of the sharpest economic crisis, with its stagger system and mass unemployment, and the brutal open wage cutting offensive, do not pass without leaving some effect on the ideology of the working masses. The Party in the Pittsburgh district was very late in noting the fundamental difference between the masses of miners who entered into strike in 1929 as members of the United Mine Workers, and those who entered the strike in the year 1931 under the leadership of the National Miners Union.

A further political error consisted in a certain degree of "worship" for spontaneity. This error was strengthened by specified traditions of the American movement. It is a twin brother of the underestimation of the radicalization process of the masses. It expressed itself:

(a) In the underestimation of the leading role of the Party and of its organizational principles.

(b) In the underestimation of the ability of the employers, government and the U. M. W. of A. to maneuver.

(c) In the lack of a strike perspective and in a too superficial

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analysis of the current strike situation in adopting concrete measures.

(d) In a dangerous neglect of the political and organizational work for the creation of functioning strike committees, of the new organization, the National Miners Union, and of the Party.

(e) In tendencies to substitute individual acts of terror when mass action was lacking.

These errors were correctly pointed out in the resolution of the Political Buro of the Central Committee on the miners' strike and in the political resolution of the last Central Committee Plenum. It is nevertheless necessary to point them out over and over again, since they have been overcome only to a very slight degree. The activity of the Party organizations in the textile and silk workers' strikes, in the work for the utilization of the miners' strikes and especially at the beginning of the Lawrence strike shows that the lessons of the miners' strike have not been sufficiently popularized in the Party and are not being fully utilized.

The political errors during the preparation, carrying out, conclusion and evaluation of the miners' strike showed themselves particularly in the following ways:

1. The Party organization in the Pittsburgh district, in spite of two years of the sharpest crisis, was not orientated towards the organization and leadership of mass strikes. This cannot be excused by such arguments as: The Party was too weak, it had too few members, etc. The error consists precisely in the fact that this weak Party organization did not realize in time what the situation was and therefore hindered its own growth politically and organizationally. Only this can explain the fact that with the breaking out of the strike, the building up of a collective Party leadership in the district had not yet begun; that no district conferences had been held for about a year; that only about fifty miners and a few steel workers belonged to the Party, and that the rest of the Party members were employed exclusively in light industry, or were unemployed.

2. The Party began the preparatory work for the miners' strike in February, after the fraction in the National Board of the N. M. U. had laid down the general line. This preparatory work was not utilized by the Party either politically or organizationally. The propagation of the miners' demands was not linked up with the propagation of the aims and of the methods of struggle of the Party, nor with the spreading of its campaigns (Scottsboro campaign, etc.). The recruiting of members was not organized either for the N. M. U. nor for the Party.

The Party thus looked upon the preparatory work for the strike as a simple trade union matter. It limited itself to a few fraction

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meetings and united front conferences of the N. M. U., to a few miners' mass meetings to raise demands, etc. The work of preparation was carried out without a clear perspective for a mass strike in the near future. The Party knew too little the real situation in the mining districts, to be able to have such a perspective. It was not until the miners' conference took place in Pittsburgh at the end of May that the Party gained a real insight into the fighting spirit of the masses. This conference led the Party to raise demands for the miners upon a district scale. Only a few days after this conference the workers laid down their tools in the first mines and thus the strike began.

3. Hence the Party organization of the Pittsburgh district was far from being sufficiently prepared for the strike. The strike movement, with its gigantic force, broke up the so-called day-to-day work of the Party, which limited itself to general propaganda meetings and to some work among the unemployed. It snowed this work under completely for a time for the few forces had been engaged in this work were, after the outbreak of the strike, used exclusively for strike work. The strike movement forced the Party to adapt its activity to the new circumstances. This process, which developed considerably in the course of the strike, has not come to an end.

Consequently, the Party was incapable from the very first day of leading the strike movement towards a conscious goal. The weaknesses of the Party organization in the Pittsburgh district led the Political Buro of the Central Committee to assign a number of comrades to Pittsburgh to assist the district leadership. These comrades, together with the District Secretariat, formed a special committee (called the top committee), whose task it was to prepare the work for the correct conduct of the strike, to organize and to control its course.

4. Even after the outbreak of the strike the Party in the Pittsburgh district underestimated to a great extent the radicalization and the political development of the masses. It showed the greatest resistance to politicalizing the strike. Instead of giving a foundation of widespread political propaganda to the effective economic demands, upon the basis of which the strike was developed and spread, it prevented the mention of the Party, its methods of work and its campaigns in strike meetings, etc., for a long time. The comrades were afraid that the mention of the Party and its campaigns would break the united front of the miners. For the same reason it failed to supply Party speakers for the mass demonstrations, to distribute Party leaflets, and to carry placards with the slogans of the Party.

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Instead of opening the doors of the Party as wide as possible to the most active elements among the striking miners, and carrying on a systematic mass recruiting, there developed in the Party a strong resistance to the taking in of striking miners in large numbers. The same resistance was made directly and indirectly to drawing in striking miners into the daily work of the leading committees of the strike apparatus and of the National Miners Union. "The workers are not sufficiently class-conscious. They are incapable of carrying out such work. They will leave the Party again after the strike, for the Party is not strong enough to develop such large masses of new members politically. They will also desert the N. M. U. after the strike if we do not succeed in winning the material demands of the miners." These were the arguments which were brought forward directly and indirectly, against drawing in the miners into the Party and into active participation in the leadership of the strike.

5. As a result, the Party developed its leading role in the strike to an altogether inadequate degree, and remained far behind in the training of new cadres. The district committee of the Party did not meet till about six weeks after the outbreak of the strike. No district conferences of the Party were held during the strike. Fraction activity in the strike apparatus and in the N. M. U. was not developed. All this had a great effect—as we shall point out later—on the strike apparatus and on the growth of the N. M. U. The so-called top committee limited its activity to deciding the current political and organizational measures for the direction of the strike. It neglected, however, to conduct in a determined and stubborn manner the struggle for the carrying out of the correct proposals, which the Political Buro of the Central Committee made for overcoming the errors and shortcomings. Thus it furthered only to a very insignificant extent the development of the Party, its organizations and fractions, the process of transformation in the political and organizational work of the Party which was set in motion by the strike. To an equally small extent did it further the development of the N. M. U. and of the strike apparatus, both in the political and organizational sense and in the application of correct methods of work for leading the masses.

The result of all of the mistakes from the political and organizational point of view was that in spite of the fact that the strike lasted ten weeks, neither a functioning district committee of the Party nor a functioning committee of the N. M. U. was built; that it was not possible to develop an active functioning executive committee of the central strike committee. The top committee attempted to lead the strike with about twelve organizers who

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were sent into the strike area, and with the leading comrades of the N. M. U. This was bound to lead to unfortunate results for the entire movement.

IV

Let us now consider how these unfortunate consequences showed themselves in the strike apparatus and in the developing N. M. U. We said that after the miners' strike broke out, the Party followed a correct united front policy and caused the election of united front strike committees on a local, section and central scale by the strikers themselves. According to the figures at hand, there were in Pennsylvania, East Ohio and West Virginia at the highest stage of the strike, some 130 local strike committees with from ten to twenty-five members. The local strike committees accomplished gigantic tasks. The marches of pickets, picket lines, demonstrations, relief and defense measures organized and carried through by them, must be characterized as model accomplishments. They showed the stubborn determination of the masses to struggle and their prodigious creative power.

The work of the local strike committees was lacking, however, in far-reaching mass organization and systematic activity. In spite of repeated decisions the locals made no registration of the strikers. They failed to make a systematic division of the necessary work among the strikers (picketing, collection of food, work in the relief kitchens, etc.). As a result they failed to control this work, too. The picket lines, which at the beginning, functioned splendidly because of the trenmendous enthusiasm, fell apart later because of the lack of good organization. In the strike area, not more than 30 local relief kitchens functioned, an entirely inadequate number in view of the fact that about 120,000 workers, their wives and children, directly affected by the strike, were in need.

Even among their own members the strike committees divided their tasks only to a small degree. No functioning org., agit-prop, and strike defense committees were built up, as the Strassburg resolution on strike strategy and tactics proposes. The connection between the local strike committees below with the strikers and above with the section strike committees as a rule were bad. In scarcely five local strike committees were there even the beginnings of a proper revolutionary propaganda through posters and leaflets. As a rule the best functioning committees were the relief and kitchen committees.

The strike area of Pennsylvania, East Ohio and West Virginia was divided into eleven sections. In order to help the work, a representative of the N. M. U. was chosen for each section, who was under the direct control of the top committee. The section

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strike committee was elected at the section strike conference. According to the reports there was a strike committee of fifteen to forty members in each section. The task of the representative of the N. M. U. in the strike committee was to organize the committee, to build the organizational, agit-prop, defense and relief committees, to organize the strikers on a section scale, to organize mass picketing, demonstrations, collections of food, to develop an effective propaganda locally against all the maneuvers of the U. M. W. of A. and the government, and to take steps against the terror and for the support of wounded, arrested workers, etc. For the fulfillment of these tasks it was necessary for them to develop some of the members of the strike committees as instructors, speakers, etc.

These tasks were nevertheless hardly begun. The chairmen of the local strike committees and the leaders of the local relief committees were generally elected to the section strike committees. They were more than overburdened with carrying out their local tasks. Therefore, at best they appeared at the meetings of the section strike committee, but took no part in its daily work. The representatives of the N. M. U. in the section strike committees neglected to draw in other forces for the carrying out of this work, forces which were at hand in large numbers among the strikers. As a result they were left alone without a staff of functionaries, without an apparatus. Their connections with the local strike committees were consequently loose. They usually had no concrete information about the strike situation, etc. This led to confusion, repetition of work, and to disorganization. It is certain that as a result of this mismanagement the workers of over twenty-five mines could not join the local strike committee, remained without help or leadership and after a short time returned to work. Not more than two section strike committees developed their own local propaganda and agitation activity.

The central strike committee at the highest stage of the strike consisted of about 500 members. The central strike committee was in no way a regularly elected and functioning body. The temporary delegates to the weekly meetings of the central strike committee were elected by the local strike committees in a purely accidental fashion. There was no clarity regarding the role and tasks of the members of the central strike committee. There was no list of these members. They received no directives, their activity was not checked up. In various sections of the strike area the following conception was developed: Different workers were to be sent to every meeting of the central strike committee in order to give every striker the opportunity to take part in such a meet-

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ing. It was impossible to determine whether the decisions of the central strike committee were made known to the strikers, or whether they were carried out. It was therefore impossible through the delegates to the central strike committee to get a real picture of the strike situation. The reports given were often extremely contradictory.

The central strike committee elected an executive committee of twenty-three. This executive was made up of a number of workers who were active in local strike or relief committees; and of several secretaries of the N. M. U. and Workers International Relief locals. The Executive Committee seldom met. None of these workers were drawn in for the accomplishment of its extensive daily tasks. As a result it was impossible to build up functioning committees for the organizational, agit-prop, youth and women's work. The developing of a staff of instructors was also neglected. All the daily work of the executive committee was carried out by the representatives of the N. M. U. and the Trade Union Unity League, under the direct leadership of the top committee.

V

Hence the strike committees were extremely loose, poorly organized structures. They lacked the backbone of a strong revolutionary union. The masses of strikers desired such an organization. It was one of the main tasks of the Party during the preparation, carrying through, and after the strike, to build the N. M. U. and to make it the leader of the miners' movement. To this end the Party carried through a broad propaganda campaign for joining the N. M. U. The new members of the N. M. U. were organized together into locals, and received their membership books during the course of the strike. There arose 130 local organizations of the N. M. U. with a membership of 25,000 and about 50 women's auxiliaries with about 600 members. Many of these locals began holding regular meetings, electing their committees, etc. In the eighth week of the strike, a district conference of the N. M. U. took place, which took up the election of a new district committee.

But the mistakes of the Party described above hindered:

(a) The development of real activity in the newly built local organizations of the N. M. U. for the furthering of the strike movement.

(b) The propaganda as to the role and tasks of the N. M. U. in the strike.

(c) The development of a feeling of responsibility and of a

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certain voluntary discipline among the newly elected functionaries of the N. M. U. toward the organization.

(d) The utilization of the growing and developing N. M. U. for the organization and stabilization of the strike apparatus.

As a result of this, the new organizations of the N. M. U. made themselves only slightly felt in the work of leading the strike. They came insufficiently to the fore, both in their propaganda, and in their organizational activity. Furthermore, the new organizations of the N. M. U. and their leadership remained just as loosely and poorly organized as the strike committees themselves. The Party did not realize sufficiently that for the building of a new union, a tremendous amount of daily detailed propaganda, agitation and organization activity must be carried out. The Party neglected this detail work, and therefore could not make the most of the tremendous possibilities for building the N. M. U. Thousands of new members have again been lost as a result of the insufficient political and organizational work. Thousands who wanted to join the N. M. U. have not yet been drawn into the organization and into its activity. Even at the present time the Party in the Pittsburgh district persists in these errors. There is no systematic propaganda based on the daily struggles of the miners. There is no systematic campaign to clarify the forms of organization of the N. M. U., regarding the urgent necessity of building up mine sections* and unemployed branches in the N. M. U. There is no serious effort to develop a broad staff of lower functionaries, which maintains contacts between the masses of its membership and the leading committees, and assures the functioning of the N. M. U. in spite of the severest terror against it.

The district committee of the N. M. U. has visited scarcely 30 per cent of the newly built locals since the end of the strike. The district committee neglected to teach the new membership the next tasks for the organization of a strong movement of the unemployed, for the liberation of the arrested functionaries, for mobilizing the working masses in the mines. It failed to take measures for the collection of dues. The work of the district committee shows that the comrades active there are not yet convinced even now of the possibility of building up a mass miners' union. There is a danger that the Party will lose an even greater part of its gains in the strike if it does not take care that the comrades in the N. M. U. carry on really conscientious mass work among the miners.

*The relation of the miners' unemployed section to the Unemployed Councils, their function and activity, I will write about in the *Daily Worker*.—WILLNER.

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VI

We shall now look into the strategy and tactics applied in the course of the strike. We shall try to answer this question: How did the errors described above affect the strategy and tactics used?

The miners' strike went through three stages of development: Outbreak of the strike and its development upward, stagnation, decline and end. After the outbreak of the first local strikes the Party decided to develop the movement. It set as the goal the establishment of a district wage scale and the recognition of the N. M. U. by the operators. The Party, through the N. M. U. and the central strike committee, sent the demands of the miners to every coal company. The Party demanded general negotiations. For tactical reasons the N. M. U., in agreement with the Party line, decided not to enter into any local wage agreements in the first phase of the strike. It was intended to tie up as many mines as possible as well as Pennsylvania's supply of soft coal. Through its energetic activity in the spreading of the strike, as we have already shown, the Party achieved many successes. The Party unfettered a tremendous activity and enthusiasm for struggle among the masses of miners.

Certain parts of the Party, however, became too intoxicated with this enthusiasm. They counted on a quick, fiery attack and a speedy end to the movement, either because the operators would give in to some extent, or because of their brutal terror. As a result of this the Party neglected to take advantage of the greatest mass enthusiasm in order to strengthen the struggle organizationally and in order to develop the leadership for the fight. This work was regarded as useless because a speedy end to the strike was foreseen. The Party also neglected a direct struggle against the U. M. W. of A. and so for some time, left the strikers defenseless against the attacks of the U. M. W. of A., which soon set in.

After a short period the operators, with the help of the government and the U. M. W. of A., began their defensive measures. They began their campaign of terror and maneuvers to confuse the strikers. It then became apparent that the struggle would become a long, bitter contest. Governor Pinchot of Pennsylvania introduced arbitration proceedings. The Terminal Coal Company after a lot of fake negotiations, in order to confuse the masses, concluded a wage agreement with the U. M. W. of A. The leaders of this fake organization therefore declared the strike over for the 3,000 employees of this company. In order to drive the workers back into the mines, they used the following demagogic propaganda: "The continuation of the strike is of no purpose, since

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the N. M. U. is refusing to make local wage agreements. The N. M. U. is not strong enough to force the operators to sign a district wage scale."

The measures taken by the operators, the government and the U. M. W. of A. were successful to a certain degree. In the mines of the Terminal Coal Company the united front of the strikers was disrupted. The spreading of the strike was blocked. The strike entered the period of stagnation.

The change in the strike situation called for immediate reaction on the part of the Party. It was necessary that steps be taken to strengthen the fighting front, to overcome the stagnation and to spread the movement further. A detailed, careful evaluation of the given strike situation was a prerequisite for deciding what new political, organizational and tactical measures were to be adopted. such a real analysis of the situation could only be made by a functioning strike apparatus. The Party was not in a position to develop such apparatus in the miners' strike to a sufficient degree. As a result it was impossible for the Party to get an unprejudiced picture of the strike situation existing at that time. The decisions of the Party, therefore, often came too late, many of the decisions were distorted, or not even transmitted to the strikers. They were, therefore, never carried out in full, although they were correct in the main.

The transition of the strike from the phase of development, to that of stagnation was also recognized very late by the Party. It still limited its activity to the arrangement of mass meetings, more or less spontaneous picket lines, etc., after the problem of organized strike duty had already become a question of the life and death for the strike. The Party still continued to neglect a really deep, thorough-going political propaganda against the government and the U. M. W. of A., based on actual facts and linked up with the popularization of the role and methods of the N. M. U. in the struggle, even after it had long become the decisive fight for stabilizing the strike front and for neutralizing the demagogy of the enemies of the workers. On this situation it evaded a clear statement that the N. M. U. was ready to conclude local agreements with every coal company on the basis of the demands of the miners. It hesitated to undertake active measures which would force the operators to sign such agreements, although there were several opportunities to do this. Instead of this, in those instances where the operators were ready to accept the demands of the miners, the Party refused to consent to such a wage agreement. It neglected to strengthen the unemployed movement, for uniting its activity with that of the strikers; hence the solidarity between the

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two which had been apparent at the beginning of the strike had considerably decreased.

After the strike had reached the state of stagnation, it became very important to adopt measures for getting relief, measures that would force the local government to give strike relief, etc. It became necessary to concentrate the struggle against the big coal companies in order to increase the influence of the N. M. U.

The Party did not understand how to take the necessary steps in time. The Party did not know to what extent strikebreakers were used and was ill-informed concerning the growing sentiment among the workers for the conclusion of the strike. As a result the Party noticed, much too late, that because of poor organization and strike relief, because of the slackening in the solidarity between the strikers and the workers, because of the terror and hunger, that the majority of the workers were returning to work. This was the case particularly in the mines of the decisive coal companies. The Party neglected to adopt the necessary measures of retreat at the proper time, and to change its tactics towards those strikers who had gone back to work. These workers were, therefore, still treated as strikebreakers, long after it had become necessary to take steps toward the re-establishment of a united front between the strikers and those who had gone back to work; after it had long become necessary to do everything possible to insure the existence of the N. M. U., to take active measures on behalf of the blacklisted strikers, to develop a strong movement of the unemployed, etc. As a result, it was not possible to take advantage of the strike to the fullest extent.

In spite of its mistakes and shortcomings the miners' strikes were among the most important events in the revolutionary movement in the United States in recent years. Through the strikes the Party found the way to a decisive turn in its work towards the factories of the basic industries. The strikes signify a new phase in the development of the C. P. U. S. A. and the revolutionary trade union movement of America. In the strike the Party performed tremendous work; every phase of activity such as the campaign for strike relief, the mobilization of the miners' wives, the work among the Negro and young workers, all gave the Party valuable experiences. However, the decisive lessons of the strikers are:

Unshakable confidence in the readiness of the workers to struggle, in their creative power;

Unreserved belief in the ability of the Party to mobilize and lead these masses in their struggles;

Greatest possible activity in order to take advantage of this movement to strengthen the Party and to develop revolutionary mass organizations;

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Complete conviction of the necessity and possibility of developing mass revolutionary unions and opposition groups in the unions of the American Federation of Labor as a prerequisite for the conscious, successful leadership of mass struggles in the basic industries by the Party through the application of a correct united front policy;

Complete conviction of the absolute necessity for the applying of the organizational principles of the Communist International and the Red International of Labor Unions in the organization and leadership of mass struggles and for the building of revolutionary trade unions, opposition groups, and for the building of the Party;

The greatest conscientiousness and feeling of responsibility of all Party members for the carrying out of political and organizational work in mobilizing and organizing the masses.

STALIN ON THE PARTY AND THE MASS ORGANIZATIONS

What are these "belts" or "levers" in the system of the dictatorship of the proletariat? What is the "guiding force"? Why are they needed?

The levers and the belts are the mass organizations of the proletariat, without whose aid the dictatorship cannot be realized in practice.

The guiding force is that of the advanced section of the proletariat, the workers' vanguard, which constitutes the veritable leader of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The proletariat needs these belts, these levers, and this guiding force, because without them it would, in its struggle for victory, be like a weaponless army in face of organized and armed capital. It needs these organizations, because without them it would inevitably be defeated in the fight for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie, for the consolidation of its own power, for the upbuilding of Socialism. The systematic help of these organizations and of the guiding force of the workers' vanguard is indispensable, because otherwise the dictatorship of the proletariat could not be durable or steadfast. *From "Leninism" by Joseph Stalin.*

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Leadership at the Bench

By JOHN STEUBEN

I

THE recent Plenum of the National Committee of the Trade Union Unity League in Pittsburgh has pointed out that the major task of the revolutionary unions and leagues is to throw the weight of our work *inside the factories*. This in itself is of course nothing new, we have heard that time and again. However, when our unions begin to carry out this decision in practice, we are immediately confronted with a whole lot of serious problems that are really new to us.

For the past two months we formed in New York quite a few shop groups in various metal, shoe, food and furniutre factories, as well as on the local railroads. The number of workers organized in each group is as low as five and as high as forty, with thousands of workers employed in those factories.

Now that we have organized these groups we find that one of the major problems we are faced with is *how can we lead these groups in such a manner that will ensure their organizational and ideological rapid growth and development among the mass of workers in these particular factories?* This is *the* problem.

The New York local of the Metal Workers Industrial League has organized sixteen shop groups and is now in the process of forming four more. The Shoe Workers Union organized about ten large groups. The Transportation Workers League organized a strong group on the local railroads and is now organizing taxi garge committees. All these groups, if properly led, become the base for strong factory union locals.

On the basis of the accumulated experiences of the New York Trade Union Unity Council, the following methods can be used in giving leadership to the shop groups:

1. The most responsible and leading comrades of the unions must be assigned to the various shop groups. We must carry on the sharpest struggle against any union leaders who consider it below their dignity to meet with a shop group of only five or ten workers. Such kind of leaders who refuse to do ground work among factory workers are not fit at the present time to be in the leadership of the revolutionary unions. In assigning leading workers to shop groups, we must avoid constant changes; it creates a feeling of distrust on the part of the workers and it also seriously hinders the activities of the shop group.

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2. Experiences, however, show that the mere assignment of outside forces to our shop groups does not at all solve the problem. For example, the Metal Workers League has now more shop groups than capable comrades who can lead these groups. The main emphasis must therefore be on developing leadership out of the ranks of the workers themselves. The task of the union representatives is therefore, not "to take over the works," but rather draw in, develop and give responsibility to the most promising and loyal workers.

3. We must organize special courses that will deal in a very concrete fashion with shop work. These sources must be composed of a majority of workers who are themselves members of shop groups. The instructors must not be those who are far removed from this work, but on the contrary, those who are directly involved in this work. Unfortunately our various schools up to now have been entirely too general, when taking up shop work.

4. We must call periodic shop delegates conferences, where an exchange of experiences will take place. For example, several of our shop groups already organized all the workers in their shops and have led successful strike struggles. Why not popularize the methods they have used, through well prepared shop conferences where workers from these factories will report.

5. In factories where there are Trade Union Unity League groups and shop nuclei of the Communist Party or Young Communist League, it is the duty of the nucleus to give real leadership. The leadership of the nucleus in the Durable Tool Company is a splendid example of concrete leadership inside a factory, with the result that the workers won their strike. A rotten example are the Party mmbers who worked in the Kircher Metal factory, where the workers walked out on strike against a wage cut, the Metal Workers League took over the leadership, the strike was partially won, but the Party members were "discovered" after the strike was over.

6. The active workers of the shop groups must be drawn into the leadership of the unions and leagues. There is a double advantage in this. First, the leadership of the unions will be composed of workers who are in daily touch with hundreds of workers in the shops and factories, knowing their desires and moods. Second, these workers will broaden out their own outlook, will enrich themselves with experiences from other factories and thus become more effective leaders in their own shops. The above is not as yet the practice of most of our unions and leagues. For example, the growth of the Metal Workers League is not reflected in its Executive Board, the same is true about the shop delegates councils of the needle, shoe and food unions.

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7. Each union and league must develop a group of voluntary organizers who will be specially trained as shop group leaders. The unemployed members should also be attracted to this work. In developing such an active cadre of workers we must see to it that we develop organizers who reflect the composition of the workers in the particular industries, native born, Negroes, women, youth, Latin Americans, etc.

II

So far we dealt primarily with *leadership to the groups*; now let us take up a few points in regards to the *leadership of the groups to the workers in their shop*. This is even a more aggravated problem because of our lack of experiences. Entirely too often do we hear remarks such as: "now that we organized a shop group what shall we do?" or "you can't do anything in our shop," etc. Also very often our amateurishness inside the shops breaks up groups immediately after they were organized.

Generally speaking, one can state that the functioning of the shop groups depends primarily on the ability of the group to champion the struggles inside the factory for the most minutest and seemingly most insignificant demands of the workers. This, coupled with a patient, careful and intelligent approach to each and every individual worker is a guarantee that the group will not only remain, but will gradually gain the support of the majority of workers. But even this is too general a statement, if not substantiated by practical experiences.

1. When a shop group is formed the natural desire of the members is to increase the membership of the group. This immediately brings to the forefront the questions "on what basis can we best broaden out the group?" The way to accomplish this task is through working out such demands which even the most reactionary or most backward workers in the shop will approve and be willing to fight for. It is on the basis of these small and partial demands that we will be able to mobilize the workers for more basic demands later on. Again a good example is the Durable Tool Company, the group began to rally its forces on the basis of struggle against compulsory overtime. The members of the group were the first ones to speak up and kick whenever the boss insisted on overtime, thus becoming the workers' spokesmen before the boss. The workers began to respect and look up to our members as leaders, the group started to "cash in" by recruiting members into the group and broaden out the fight for wage increases and shortening of hours. The boss fired one of the active members. At this time the group was already well entrenched and decided on a strike. After several days of strike the workers not only gained an increase in wages and shortening of hours, but even forced the boss to recognize the shop com-

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mittee. As a result of such splendid leadership that the group has given to the workers, the entire shop has joined the Metal Workers League. The small group of yesterday became today the elected shop committee of the entire shop, now even openly collecting dues and selling our literature inside the shop.

2. We can safely say that at the present time the most important task of our shop groups is the mobilization of the workers to struggle against wage cuts, no matter whether it is presented openly or in form of the stagger system, through speed-up, or even through "voluntary" contributions to the unemployed. In this respect we can record that our shop groups in the shoe factories in New York have already led such strike struggles, most of which were partially or entirely successful, with the result that in most cases our groups have strengthened themselves considerably and in some shops the majority of the workers joined the unions.

However, we have some groups that did not carry out their duties in regards to the struggle against the wage cutting campaign. For example, we have eight members in the E. M. C. (a large metal factory). It is one of the first factories where a real stagger system was introduced, one or two days' work for over a year. Our group did not initiate any struggle whatsoever, even though the majority of the workers are disgusted. Of course, the main criticism must be leveled, not against these workers, but against the leadership of the Metal Workers League and the T. U. U. C. Unfortunately, this is not the only group. It is interesting to note that these kind of shop groups not only failed to grow, but even some of the workers who previously joined, when they saw no action, dropped out since.

3. Our shop groups must learn not only to be alert, but even capable to out-maneuver the bosses. The New York City Emergency Relief Committee has just completed a campaign for $18,000,000. Most of the money comes from the pockets of the workers who either had to "volunteer" to give five or ten per cent of their wages for a period of twenty weeks, or be fired. The bosses of the E. M. C. (one of the largest furniture factories in New York) called a meeting of all the workers, demanding from them to "volunteer" to pay weekly to the unemployment fund. In that factory a whole department is organized by us. This department, knowing the resistance of the workers to pay the boss, should have taken the lead in exposing the whole affair. Unfortunately, they did not do so. The least our members could have done was to insist that the workers should pay less, or that the money should not be given to the boss, but be controlled by the workers, and that they should decide where the money should go, but not even this

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was done. The group therefore missed a good opportunity to establish itself as the leader.

4. A very dangerous tendency prevails among many comrades who are placed in charge of shop groups. Namely, as soon as the group is organized the next thing on their mind is "strike." This impatience and jumping policy does not help to establish the group in the eyes of the workers. One of our most important metal groups was almost ruined by such adventurism. "Strike moods" are perfectly all right if these are the moods of the workers, well prepared by us, but if this is a mere desire of the leaders, or of a few victimized workers, we must think twice and consult the workers a dozen times, and on the basis of the opinion of the workers shall a policy be shaped. Just one example: in one of the largest metal plants outside of New York, we formed a substantial shop group. One of our first members was fired. The comrade in charge of the group made up her mind that "we must strike." She even decided the date of the strike. A special meeting of the shop group was called and the workers almost unanimously were of the opinion that something has to be done, but all of them felt that should they declare a strike, it will be a lost battle at the present time. The leader of the group failed to take into account the fact that we are strong only in one department, that even the night shift of this department is not organized, that the same company has several other mills in other parts of the country, etc. It shows that the workers, while not being theoreticians, instinctively know the exact relation of forces. The strike was not declared; the group was saved, but the comrade in charge of the group felt "disappointed."

5. A few shop groups were formed as a result of our unions participating in spontaneous factory strikes. Most of these strikes ended in a defeat for the workers. The spirit prevailing among workers after their strike was lost is, naturally, not the best one. It is in such a period that a militant shop group can do a great deal in raising the morale of the workers inside the shop and lay the basis for the "next round." Such groups must receive the utmost attention from our unions and leagues. Unfortunately, so far our leading comrades of the unions were themselves overcome by such moods. Three thousand young workers of the Loft factory in Long Island City went out on a strike against a wage cut. These workers put up a splendid battle against the boss and the police. The bosses, however, succeeded in breaking the strike through a bunch of racketeers. The Food Workers Industrial Union participated in the strike and as a result formed a group. But the union miserably failed so far to give proper guidance and leadership to the group

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along the lines outlined above. The same mistake was committed by the Newark local of the Metal Workers League in regards to the Crucible Steel strike—a mistake that must be corrected, and not repeated by the rest of the unions.

6. Our shop literature (leaflets and shop papers) play an important role in the development of our shop groups. In this field we have already enriched ourselves with interesting experiences. However, there is an outstanding weakness—a light-minded attitude to demands and proposals contained in our leaflets. It would be well to recommend to our trade union functionaries and other factory workers to carefully read Krupskaya's book on *Lenin*, how careful and exact Lenin was when he wrote factory leaflets, something we must all learn.

7. If we have already some experiences in shop organization, we have practically no experience in regards to organizing workers on ships, land, transport, etc. Our movement must begin to think about it very seriously.

III

Up to now we took up problems of great importance to our groups when they are in its initial stages. But what are our tasks after the groups pass this stage and are no more groups, but embrace already the majority of workers in the shops?

1. When we reach already this stage there are no more groups. If the shop is big enough we proceed immediately to form shop union branches or locals. We elect an Executive Committee, with representation to the shop delegates council of the union, etc.

2. If in those factories our unions were officially recognized and union conditions won, even then the job is not over, as some comrades think. The main task now is to protect every bit that was gained by the workers as a result of struggle and establish the most perfect form of organization and discipline inside the shops. Our union representatives must visit regularly the shops and take up such problems as: dispute in settlements of prices, interference on the part of the boss with union affiliations, discharges and reinstatements, wage complaints, illegal piece-work or overtime, compensation cases, ill-treatment of workers, discrimination against Negro workers, to help solve some of the disputes among the workers themselves, etc. These are not small problems, if our union functionaries take care and are capable to solve these questions our unions will maintain their gains and still further broaden out. In this respect the Needle Workers Industrial Union has made some advances. For example, from October 1 to November 20, the union representatives made 1,313 visits to union shops, have attended to 462 complaints, have settled 141 wage complaints and collected for the workers $807.66 in wages, that the bosses refused to pay. The

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Furniture Workers Union is now working along similar lines. The Textile and Food Workers Unions have a long way to go establishing such proper methods of work.

3. We still have other shops, especially in the shoe and furniture industries, where the shop committee, instead of the union, is officially recognized in the shop. Our major tasks in such shops is to see to it that the shop committee operates on the basis of the policies of the Trade Union Unity League. In several shoe factories the bosses pursued a policy of antagonizing the shop committee to the union, by bribing some members of the committee, raising the cry of "Communism," etc. In some shops the bosses met with success. The unions must therefore be alert to this serious problem and solve it on the basis of establishing the closest contact with the rank and file with the union—not to hesitate for one moment to open fire and isolate those individuals who become victims of the bosses' methods and policies.

4. The problem of systematic education and a process of enlightenment among the membership of the Trade Union Unity League organizations is of decisive importance. Craft ideology, craft methods of work, narrow-mindedness, is not an isolated occurrence in our ranks. It is not an exaggeration if we will state that the bulk of the Trade Union Unity League membership does not even know that the Trade Union Unity League is part of an international organization, the Red International of Labor Unions. Some headway has been made in this respect, the T. U. U. C. school, union open forums, union classes, etc., but is far from being satisfactory. Each union must work out a whole program of educational activity. If the leadership of the unions will take this problem seriously we will be able to defeat such maneuvers of the bosses and American Federation of Labor bureaucrats, as in the shoe industry.

5. Many times our own approach to our shop organizations tends to give food to this narrow-mindedness and backwardness of the workers. Very seldom are the general campaigns of our movement being taken up in shops; if they are taken up, only in a formal manner. This weakness we must overcome; if we don't we shouldn't blame later on the backwardness of the workers if they don't see, or are reluctant to accept the policies of the Trade Union Unity League.

It would be very well if the comrades of the National Miners Union, Metal League in Pittsburgh, National Textile Workers Union in Lawrence, will relate their experiences in solving the above-raised problems.

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On the Theoretical Foundations of Marxism-Leninism

By ADORATSKY
(*Translation from the Russian by* L. KATZ)

The following article is a preface to the first part of Volume VI of the selected works by Lenin, entitled "The Theoretical Foundations of Marxism. As a preface it does not offer an exhaustive treatment of the questions at issue but rather it merely presents an introduction to the works of Lenin collected in Volume VI and other volumes of his selected works. —V. A.

I. MARXISM—THE THEORY AND TACTICS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE OF THE PROLETARIAT

LENIN defines Marxism as the revolutionary theory and tactics of the proletariat in its revolutionary class struggle. The task of the proletariat is "to deliberately and consciously take part in the historic process of the transformation of society, a process that is taking place under our very eyes." (Marx: *Mr. Focht,* 1860.)

The proletariat, because of the role it plays in the productive process and in society is destined to play the part of leader, organizer and director of the struggle of all the oppressed and exploited—against capitalism and for Communism.

In 1846 Karl Marx wrote as follows:

> "Communism means to us not a state of things, that is to be established, not an ideal, into which reality is to be fitted. To us Communism is an actual movement, that is destroying the present state of things. The state of that movement is determined from day to day by the prevailing objective conditions at the given time and place."

The growth of the working class (its quantitative growth and also growth of consciousness), large scale production as well as the social character of production—developing already under capitalism —are understood by Marx as being among the determining objective conditions of Communism mentioned above.

> "The development of the productive forces of social labor," says Marx, "is the historic mission as well as the justification of capital. And this in itself is unconsciously creating the material conditions of a higher system of production." (*Capital,* Vol. 3, Part I, p. 242, ed. 1909.) *

* All references in the text are to the Russian editions, except where specifically indicated otherwise.

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But private ownership of the means of production—that cornerstone of bourgeois society, has become an obstacle, fetters, hindering the further growth of the productive forces. And those fetters can be smashed only by the proletariat after its conquest of power and establishment of its own dictatorship. It must smash the apparatus of the bourgeois state, it must maintain and save its supremacy in the fire of civil war, it must crush the resistance of the bourgeoisie, it must take hold of all large-scale production in order to rebuild the entire productive system along socialist lines, utilizing at first all available material inherited from capitalism, and on its very ruins proceed as speedily as possible with the development of socialist production at a gigantic pace.

The proletariat draws along with it also non-proletarian layers of the population, oppressed and exploited by capital. Under the leadership of the industrial proletariat, during its dictatorship takes place the rebuilding of the entire productive system, the transformation of the small producers into full fledged members of the socialist society. The proletariat thus establishes a new material basis for the social life of humanity and, through class war and with the help of its own dictatorship, abolishes classes and finally reaches a classless form of society. Such is the world historic task of the proletariat. (See *State and Revolution,* Vol. XXI, p. 384 and others.)

Of tremendous importance to the revolutionary struggle of the working class of today is revolutionary theory, i. e., those scientific deductions and generalization based on the experiences of the revolution and of the labor movement of all countries. "Without revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement," Lenin used to say. The foundations of that theory were laid by Marx and Engels and were further developed by Lenin.

The working class of many countries has had the opportunity to check up the correctness of this theory by the experiences of its own struggles during a series of decades. This theory has already played and is destined to again play in the future a tremendous role in the struggle of the working class. In Russia, for instance, we would not have been able either to seize, to maintain, or to conceive correctly the problems involved in the building of Socialism, if we did not have the firm and consistent leadership of the Communist Party, a leadership that is based on revolutionary Marxist theory, if the working class would have failed to recognize as correct just that particular leadership. The working class is sure to vanquish the bourgeoisie the world over while guiding itself in its struggles by the theory of Marxism-Leninism.

Marxism does not give out ready-made formulas, to be learned

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by heart and then to be applied as a cure-all under all and variegated conditions of time and place without any further ado. The theory of Marxism is "not a dogma, but a guide to action." It gives general guidance as to how the struggle of the working class is to be conducted. Carefully studying all contemporary social phenomena, taking personally a leading part in the labor movement, Marx formed conclusions, charted the general line of development and thus pointed out the inevitable outcome on the basis and in the light of actual experience. He pointed out the inevitability of the revolutionary transformation of capitalist society into a communist one, the leading role of the proletariat in that process, the certainty of an intermediate stage on the road from capitalism to Communism and that the particular form of state during that period would be the dictatorship of the proletariat. Marx, however, could not foresee the actual line of march of the world revolution in all its details and neither did he undertake to solve such a problem.

Marx taught that in order to decide the question of immediate tasks for the given historic moment and the given country under given conditions a thorough study (guided by the method of scientific Communism) and consideration is needed of all the peculiarities of the particular historic situation (a factor constantly changing) of all the surrounding circumstances as a whole not only inside a given country but in all other countries the world over.

> "Only on the basis of such a study does Marxism consider it possible to develop through the combined efforts of all thoughtful representatives of the given class, the necessary fund of knowledge and experience' and—aside from knowledge and experience—political acumen for quick and correct decisions of complex political questions. (Lenin: *Infantile Sickness of Leftism in Communism,* Vol. XXV, p. 210.)

The actual struggle of the masses is the source from which Marxism draws its ideas. The theory of Marxism develops in the most close relation with the mass revolutionary movement. That theory is not based on ideas "discovered or established by this or that universal reformer," it represents—

> "merely a general formulations of the actual conditions surrounding the contemporary struggle of classes, the historically siginficant movement that is taking place before our very eyes." (*Communist Manifesto.*)

The theory of Marxism makes clear for the proletariat "the conditions and the nature of its own acts." (Engels, *Anti-Duehring.*)

The task of the theoretician of the proletariat consists not in inventing socialistic plans but rather in disclosing those conditions for abolishing exploitation that are created in the very process of social

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and economic developments, in disclosing the road to which life itself is pointing as leading to the final solution of the problems of the masses that are oppressed by capitalism, in helping in their struggle for Communism, and directing their struggle in a way that society based on exploitation shall be destroyed in the shortest possible time and with the least number of victims from the ranks of the proletariat and all other toilers. As already stated above, the proletariat, by virtue of its position in the system of production and in society, can and must act as organizer of the Communist society. The theory of Marxism should serve the purpose of helping the proletariat "to put an end to all exploitation as speedily and easily as possible."

In this activity mere general declarations are not effective. It is necessary to have precise decisions concerning concrete problems of the daily political struggle and organization. And this requires leadership based on science, foresight, based on deep study of facts; it can be accomplished by guiding oneself by the theory of Marxism —Leninism.

> "Only theory," says comrade Stalin, "can give the movement confidence, capacity for orientation and an understanding of the inner logic of contemporary events, because theory and it alone can enable those engaged in the practical struggle to understand not only how and whither the classes moving today but also how and whither they are sure to move in the nearest future." (Stalin, *The Foundations of Leninism,* International Publishers, p. 94.)

As already stated above the struggle of the proletariat is led and directed by its advanced guard—the Communist Party.

In his article, *Our Next Task,* published in 1899, Lenin emphasized that the task of a revolutionary proletarian Party

> "does not consist in an effort to simply give service to the labor movement, the task is rather to combine Socialism with the labor movement—to impregnate the elemental labor movement with definite socialist ideals, give it socialist convictions which must be on the plane of contemporary science, connect it up with a systematic political struggle for democracy (this was written six years before the revolution of 1905—V. A.) as a means for the realization of Socialism, in short, to fuse this elemental movement into one homogenious whole with the activities of the revolutionary Party.
>
> "The history of Socialism and democracy in Western Europe, the history of the Russian revolutionary movement, the experiences of our labor movement—such is the particular material, that we must master and assimilate in order to be able to construct a rational organization and tactic for our Party." (Lenin Works, Vol. II, pp. 496-497.)

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And Lenin further pointed out that there can be no such thing as a mechanical transplanting of ready-made formulæ and their application to suit new and peculiar conditions.

> "The adaptation of that material must be done . . . independently because there are no ready-made patterns." (*Ibid*, p. 497.)

Lenin points out that the Russian labor movement exists under conditions entirely different from those of the movement in Western Europe, on the other hand, the past revolutionary parties in Russia could not serve as examples. Recognizing

> "the necessity to learn from the old Russian experts of revolutionary and conspirative technic"—Lenin used to emphasize that this "does not at all relieve us from the duty to consider them critically and build or organization independently." (Lenin, Works, Vol. II, p. 497.)

Thus, Lenin, following closely the method of Marx, would determine the context of the theory, would emphasize the necessity of an independent study of each new experience and also of utilizing everything of value acquired in the course of previous developments.

We have already stated that, according to Marx, the theoretician of the proletariat should voice the revolutionary problems of the mass movement, directing it as well as learning from it, utilizing the entire experience of the international revolution. Such is the spirit in which Lenin wrote and acted. He placed particular value on those theoreticians who cultivated *contact with the masses.*

> "You can tell a revolutionist-Marxist," wrote Lenin in 1918—"from an ordinary commonplace citizen and petty bourgeois by his skill in preaching to the dark (illiterate) masses the necessity for the coming revolution, making clear its inevitability, explaining its usefulness to the people and preparing the proletariat and all the toiling and exploited masses for it." (*The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade,* Vol. XXIII, p. 383.)

Here is emphasized the great importance of the ability to cultivate close contacts with the most backward masses, ability to draw them into the movement, get them to take up revolutionary positions in order that "the masses themselves, through personal experience, should convince themselves of the correctness of the Party line." This is one of the very basic principles of Leninism. It was unreservedly assimilated by the program of the Communist International and is the most distinctive, most characteristic feature of the entire activities of Marx and Lenin.

> "The task of Communists," says Lenin, "consists wholly in mastering the art of convincing the backward masses, of working in

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> their midst and not becoming separated from them through childish 'left' slogans invented by themselves." (See *Infantile Sickness of Leftism in Communism*, Vol. XXV, p. 199.)

The newspaper *Retch*, discussing in 1914 the struggle of the Bolsheviks against liquidatism, was bewailing "the bringing of discord into the working masses." In the articles, *The Methods of Struggle of the Bourgeois Intellectuals against the Workers*, Lenin wrote as follows:

> "We greet this 'bringing of discord into the working masses because just those masses and they alone will distinguish quarrels' from mere differences of opinions as such, only they will understand those differences, will form their own opinion, and will decide the question not 'with whom' to go, but where to go, that is the questions of their own, very definite very clear, thoroughly considered, well tested line." (Lenin, Works, Vol. XVII, p. 495.)

The working out of this line, the political enlightenment of the laboring masses must proceed in no other way except "through sustained, consistent struggle to the end, for proletarian influence and aims against those of the bourgeoisie." (Lenin, Works, Vol. XVII, p. 504.)

At the same time we should never forget that the masses are learning from their own experience, from life, and not merely from books.

In one of his prefaces to the *Manifesto* (German edition, 1890) Engels writes as follows:

> "For Marx the only guarantee promulgated in the Manifesto lies in that mental development of the working class, that follows inevitably as a result of common action and discussion. The events and the changing fortunes of the struggle against capital, the victories and more so the defeats inevitably lead the struggling masses to a realization of the complete ineffectiveness of those cure-all quack means which they had held to up till then and make their minds more open to a thorough understanding of the true conditions for the emancipation of the workers."

Thus, out of the actual mass struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie combined with the conscious leadership of that struggle by the advanced guard of the proletariat—the Communist Party, emerges scientific Communism, which differs fundamentally from the utopian petty-bourgeois reformist socialism. Scientific Communism is based on the class struggle of the proletariat and on the recognition of the necessity of proletarian dictatorship and not at all on mere good wishes.

The theory of scientific Communism is Marxism and, its further development under new conditions—Leninism. The theory em-

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bracing as it does both general problems of world outlook and of method and also their concrete application, is needed by the proletariat in its struggle—it imbues the movement with consciousness, assurance and firmness; it relieves those that know how to guide themselves by it of the danger of vacillations, helps in finding the more correct way, helps to attain victory more easily and surely and with greater certainty to consolidate that victory.

II. LENINISM—ITS INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

By virtue of the close relationship, already mentioned above, that exists between theory and reality, the change in the entire surroundings that have taken place already after the death of Marx and Engels, necessarily found their reflex in the theory. The theoretical foundation inherited by Lenin from Marx—dialectic materialism—was further developed by Lenin independently. Lenin had to carry on his activity in new and different surroundings; and entire series of problems had to be solved in a new way and, guided by the Marxist method he solved the difficult problem of struggle for revolutionary Marxism in the new and complex setting of the epoch of imperialism and of the world proletarian revolution, already set in motion. Not one of the greatest theoreticians and leaders of the Second International succeeded in the task of solving this problem after Marx. Only Lenin actually solved it because he was in close contact with the mass movement of the proletariat and mastered the theory of Marxism as no one else did. Lenin expressed the world historic problems of the proletariat most clearly and correctly. Directing its struggles during the course of three revolutions, Lenin pushed ahead and developed the theory of Marxism in all its component parts. With full justification therefore, the term of *Leninism* is given to Marxism of the latest epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution.

The epoch of Lenin was different from the epoch of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels lived and developed their theory at a time when the proletariat was beginning to act ever more definitely as an independent force, and that prompted the bourgeois to favor compromises with reaction. In 1852, in his pamphlet, *The Eighteenth Brumaire Louis Bonaparte*, Marx wrote that in the nineteenth century the beginning of a series of proletarian revolutions will take place. He based his conclusions in this case on his theoretical deduction arrived at already prior to 1848 as well as on the experiences of the revolutions of 1848. In a speech delivered in the spring of 1856 on the occasion of the anniversary of the English labor newspaper, *People's Paper*, Marx said:

> "The so-called revolutions of 1848 were comparatively speaking only small affairs, mere insignificant cracks and folds in the hard

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> crust of bourgeois society. But they revealed a vast new world, under a surface apparently perfectly hard, there was revealed an immense ocean which by a mere overflow is capable of breaking up into bits and swallowing up entire continents. These revolutions proclaimed in a very disorderly and noisy fashion the liberation of the proletariat, thus revealing the secret of the nineteenth century and of its revoltion."

And in closing his speech, Marx pointed out:

> "The English workers are the first-born of contemporary industry and naturally, therefore, they will not be the last ones within the ranks of those who are destined to bring forth the fruit of that industry, the revolution. That revolution will mean the liberation of their class throughout the world. It is just as international as the domination of capital and subjugation of labor.

Marx proclaimed the inevitability of the proletarian revolution. However, during the life of Marx and Engels the time for its arrival was not altogether ripe. Marx foresaw that the process of development leads inevitably to monopoly of big capital and stated that fact in his *Capital*. But the actual widespread supremacy of monopolistic large-scale capital all over the world, that finally culminated in the domination of finance capital in imperialism appeared only after the death of Marx and Engels. In the 60's of the nineteenth century the center of the development and supremacy of large-scale capital (and of the looting of colonies) was England.

By the end of the nineteenth and at the beginning of the twentieth century capitalism attained in a series of other countries even greater strength than in England itself (particularly in Germany and the U. S. A.). All the colonies had already been grabbed up by that time. By the end of the nineteenth century a struggle was raging, no more on the issue of a division, but on the issue of a redivision of the globe, a cruel struggle between big imperialistic robber powers. The epoch of imperialism arrived, the epoch of the merging of the usury and bank capital with industrial capital in the form of finance capital—the epoch of the supremacy of finance capital. The time has arrived, as Lenin expressed it, "of decaying and dying capitalism." As to what are the distinctive features of that condition, the fundamental features of the economics of imperialism, of that newest, latest stage in the development of capitalism, the extensive work of Lenin *Imperialism—The Final Stage of Capitalism* (Works, Vol. XIX, pp. 71-175), and also the article *Imperialism and the Split of Sovialism* (Works, Vol. XIX, pp. 301-313) should be read.

Already prior to the imperialist war and particularly at its ap-

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proach, a revolutionary situation was being created in the countries of old developed capitalism as a result of the pronounced sharpening of capitalist contradictions: increase of cost of living, increase of oppression, worsening of the conditions of the masses of the working class. The revolution was already unfolding itself even before the war. In the countries of the east a series of revolutions began right after the revolution of 1905 in Russia. In 1906 in Persia, in 1908-1909 in Turkey, in 1911 in China. In the European countries among the signs of an approaching revolution were the very great strikes in England (the general strike of the railroad workers in 1911, the strike of mine workers in 1912), the struggle of the workers in Germany (the demonstration in favor of universal suffrage in Prussia in 1910), the labor unrest in Russia (protest strikes against the Lena executions of 1912, the strikes during the summer of 1913 in Baku and other places, the demonstrations in St. Petersburg, that resulted in armed clashes and even erection of barricades).

The question of the proletarian revolution became an immediately pressing one in the capitalist countries. All the basic conditions for the transition to Socialism had ripened; the proletarian revolution became objectively necessary. It became necessary to displace the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie with the dictatorship of the proletariat, because out of all the classes of contemporary society, the proletariat alone is capable of leading the toiling masses out of the blind alley into which they had been taken by the ruling bourgeoisie.

But out of all the labor parties of the world the Party of the Bolsheviks with Lenin at its head proved to be the only one that was actually qualified to solve the problems of leadership of the proletarian revolution.

In the west-European countries there grew up and got firmly rooted among the labor parties during the long period of reaction, begun after the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, the habit of having recourse to legal forms of struggle only and along side with it opportunism also grew and developed; much of "opportunistic dung" (as Lenin put it) has accumulated.

One of the important reasons of the firmly established and greatly increased influence of opportunism was the phenomena, so prevalent in all the imperialistic countries, of bribing by the capitalists of the upper layers of the working class (the very small layer of labor aristocracy) out of their super-profit, the proceeds of the looting of colonies and semi-colonies. This caused the growing up within the working class itself of a certain, true, small indeed, layer, sympathetic to the bourgeoisie, the carrier of bourgeoisie influence within the working class.

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A sharp turn in the entire setting has taken place at the beginning of the imperialist war. In the western countries "free," constitutional, republican—the necessity of an armed uprising, of a transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war, became the order of the day, because it is wholly impossible to break away from the fangs of exploitation in any other way except by means of a bloody struggle.

Of all the European parties only the Party of the Bolsheviks in Russia had received an adequate preliminary schooling for such a struggle, because in Russia the revolutionary situation began from the middle of the nineteenth century and it began to grow up the mightiest revolutionary movement in Europe.

In Russia all the contradictions of present period of imperialism were brought together and became their "point of juncture," as it were. There were concentrated both the oppression of enslaved peoples by one of the great powers and the military feudal oppression of czarism—the most beastly form of political oppression in existence at the time. In Russia there was still in existence the system of landowning by a class of nobles, with many remnants of serfdom both in economy (particularly peasant economy), in habits of life, and in political institutions. At the same time there was rapid development of capitalism, a rapid growth of large-scale industry concentrated in a few central points; a working class grew up, bank capital, syndicates and trusts, *i.e.*, the mightiest forms of imperialistic finance capital, developed (particularly rapidly since 1905). Alongside of developing peasant war against the noblemen —landowners, grew also the class war of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie. A process of dovetailing of both of these class wars was taking place, which according to Marx, was particularly favorable to a final victory of the proletariat. Already Marx and Engels were pointing out the approach of a revolution in Russia, the extremely rapid development of capitalism in this tremendously large country alongside with the unbearable nature of czarist oppression.

Marx and Engels understood:

1. The great complexity of the social structure of Russia, the presence there of all social forms from the very primitive up to the most modern and up-to-date ("all stages of social development beginning with the primitive commune up to the largest scale industry and mightiest type of contemporary finances," Engels wrote in a letter to V. I. Zasulich in 1885).

2. They took note of the presence of a revolutionary situation; the revolution is only awaiting the push that will bring tremendously large masses into motion.

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3. They foresaw the gigantic force of the revolutionary explosion, the inevitability of the very violent bitter character of the coming revolution ("Russia is on the eve of the greatest revolution," Marx wrote to Engels in 1870).

4. The unheard-of widespread character of the coming clash in the last among the great European countries that is passing through the capitalist industrial revolution ("this time the crash will be of such unheard of magniture, as has never been equalled; all the elements are there: intensity, universal scope and drawing into the movement of all the propertied and ruling social elements" (Engels to Marx, April 14, 1856).

5. The tremendous international significance of the Russian revolution for the world revolution; Marx and Engels never doubted the socialist character of the latter (see Marx in letter to Engels: Nov. 13, 1859; Feb. 13, 1863; Sept. 27, 1877, etc.).

Of great importance, both for the Russian revolution and for the working out of the theory of Lenin, was the circumstance that already there was in existence an extensive accumulated experience in the field of revolution and of the labor movement, and secondly, the theory of Marxism developed and worked out in perfect fashion by Marx and Engels, a theory that was imbibed, assimilated and tested by the revolutionary proletarian Party and by the broad masses. The Party of the Bolsheviks developed and grew strong during the course of a long drawn-out struggle and revolutions. It imbibed and in its turn impressed upon the masses the experience of the international labor movement and of the west-European revolutions. In the *Infantile Sickness of Leftism in Communism,* Lenin wrote:

> "Marxism as the only correct revolutionary theory was attained in Russia only through a half-century long history of unheard-of travail and sacrifice, through greatest revolutionary heroism and almost incredible energy and devotion in research, study, practical experience, disappointment, checking-up and comparing with the experience of Europe." (See Vol. XXV, p. 175.)

Aside from this Lenin emphasized the great importance and value of the personal experience and revolutionary hardening acquired by the Bolshevik Party in the course of the long drawn-out struggle with absolutism as well as with the liberal bourgeoisie and also with the petty-bourgeoisie; vacillating and unsteady revolutionaries (social revolutionaries, anarchists and others), and with all varied tendencies, vacillations, and deviations in its own ranks. These deviations and bourgeois influences upon the proletariat were overcome by a struggle that was carried on against the successively changing forms of opportunism and their various shadings; against economism , Menshevism, liquidationism, social-patriotism, and

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against those hiding behind "left" phrases—so-called "recallism," "forwardism" ("*vperodovstva*"), "left Communism," etc., as well as against conciliatory tendencies, which are also a cover for opportunism and are therefore extremely dangerous.

We have been discussing here the Russian Revolution in such great detail because precisely in Russia did the Bolshevik Party assume form and attain maturity. But it would be entirely incorrect to think that Bolshevism (which is the same as Leninism) was based on the Russian experience alone, that it is a purely Russian phenomenon. Leninism was and is based on international experience and is of international significance.

The revolutionary proletariat of the entire world and all the oppressed masses that are carrying on a struggle against imperialism can attain their freedom only through a proletarian revolution. In Leninism the proletariat finds its theory; a theory that takes note of and throws light on its own experiences and indicates the way the working class is to conduct its struggles, attain victory, seize power, consolidate victories, lead all the toilers in their struggle against exploitation and finally build Socialism.

In his pamphlet, *The Proletarian Revolution and Kautsky the Renegade,* Lenin has himself pointed out that the reason for the world-wide successes of Bolshevism is because of the profound sympathy of the masses with the revolutionary tactic *in practice* due to the fact that the revolution is actually ripening all over the world. Enumerating all the accomplishments of Bolshevism, Lenin pointed out that Bolshevik tactics were based on a correct estimation of the revolutionary situation which was being created throughout the whole of Europe.

Bolshevism has unmasked, broken away from the old rotten International of socialist traitors, has built up the ideological and tactical principles of the Third International, that take into consideration both the achievements of the epoch of peace as well as the experiences of the revolutionary epoch, already begun. With the Soviet power as an object lesson Bolshevism has proven that the workers together with the poorest peasants are able to seize power, to defend their rule against attack by the bourgeoisie of the entire world and to build Socialism.

With Russia as an example the masses the world over have an opportunity to convince themselves that Bolshevism has shown "the correct way out of the terrors of war and imperialism, that Bolshevism has qualified as a model of tactics for all." (Lenin, Vol. XXIII, p. 386.)

The preliminary training and unflinching fighting capacity of the Bolshevik Party assured a most important international role for

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Bolshevism in its struggle against opportunism and for the creation of the Third Communist International. Alongside of a crystallization of the experience of the Russian revolution, Bolshevism reflected the experience of the entire international (mainly European) labor movement, that has entered the epoch of a sharpening of all contradictions. the epoch of socialist revolution.

Already before the war, as well as during the course of the imperialist war, Lenin took note in his works of the experiences of the entire international struggle. Under the leadership of Lenin, especially after the beginning of the world war in 1914, a stubborn fight was conducted against opportunism throughout the world and in this spirit, in the spirit of revolutionary Marxism, the Communist Parties of all the European countries were growing up, Parties that began to appear as a result of this very struggle of many years duration. In a series of letters to the workers of many countries Lenin illuminated and clarified the problems of the international revolution, explained the nature of the immediate crucial task of the contemporary historic period, the struggle for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat throughout the world. Under the direction of Lenin the Communist International was created and the foundations were laid for its program, organization and tactics.

To sum up, Lenin is the Marxism of the epoch of imperialism and proletarian revolution. During this epoch the entire proletarian movement has been lifted to a new, higher level. The proletariat has grown up quantitatively as well as in organized strength, consciousness and historic activity; it has learned to master the new forms of struggle, having conquered state power and having established its dictatorship in a tremendously large country. In his activities and in his literary works Lenin took note of, reflected and digested all these new phenomena that made their appearance with the new epoch. Directing the struggle of the proletariat under the new conditions, Lenin pushed forward, developed the theory of Marxism, and added something new in all branches of Marxian theory. Leninism, therefore, is a new stage in the development of Marxism.

(*To be continued*)

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Some Questions Relating to the History of Bolshevism

Letter to the Periodical Proletarskaya Revoluzia *

By J. STALIN

DEAR COMRADES: I emphatically protest against the publication, as a discussion article, of the anti-Party and semi-Trotskyist article by Slutski: "The Bolsheviks and German Social Democracy in the Period of Its Pre-War Crisis," in the *Proletarskaya Revoluzia* (No. 6, 1931).

Slutski asserts that Lenin (the Bolsheviki) underestimated the danger of *centrism* in Germany and in the social democracy in general before the war, that is, the danger of the conciliatory attitude towards opportunism. In other words, Slutski considers that Lenin (the Bolsheviki) did not carry on an irreconcilable struggle against opportunism, for an underestimation of centrism is, at bottom, a relinquishment of the struggle taken up against opportunism. The resultant conclusion is that in the period preceding the war Lenin was not a real Bolshevik, and that he did not become a real Bolshevik until the period of imperialist war or even until the close of this war. This is what Slutski states in his article. And instead of exposing this newly anointed "historian" as a calumniator and falsifier, you enter into discussion with him, furnish him with a platform from which he may speak. I cannot but protest against the publication of Slutski's article in your periodical as a discussion article, for we cannot take as a subject of discussion the question of Lenin's *Bolshevism*, the question of whether Lenin did or *did not carry on* an irreconcilable fight on principle against centrism as a definite variety of opportunism, and whether Lenin *was or was not* a Bolshevik.

In your "editorial declaration" to the Central Committee of October 20 you admit that the editorial board committed an error in permitting the publication of Slutski's article as a contribution to discussion. This is of course in order, although the declaration of your editors appears after great delay. But in your declaration you permit a fresh error to be committed when you announce that your

* Periodical issued by the Commission for Research into the History of the C. P. S. U.—EDITOR.

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editors "consider the further examination, in the *Proletarskaya Revoluzia*, of the whole of the issues connected with the relations of the Bolsheviki and the II International before the war to be exceedingly opportune and necessary." This means that you intend raising a discussion once more on questions which are axioms to the Bolsheviki. It means that you propose to convert the question of Lenin's Bolshevism from an axiom back to a problem requiring "further examination." Why? For what reason? We all know that Leninism arose, grew, and became strong, in a relentless struggle against opportunism of every shade, including centrism in the West (Kautsky) and centrism among us (Trotsky and others). Even the direct enemies of Bolshevism cannot deny this. It is an axiom. But you drag us back again, and endeavor to make of an axiom a problem needing "further elaboration." Why? For what reason? Perhaps out of ignorance of the history of Bolshevism? Perhaps for the sake of a rotting Liberalism, in order that Slutski and other disciples of Trotsky cannot say that their mouths are being stopped? A very remarkable Liberalism, realized at the cost of the vital interests of Bolshevism. . . .

What do the editors regard as really worthy of discussion in Slutski's article?

1. Slutski maintains that Lenin (the Bolsheviki) did not pursue a line directed towards a breach, a split, with the opportunists in German social democracy and the opportunists of the II International before the war. You want to discuss against this Trotskyist thesis of Slutski's. But what is there to discuss? Is it not obvious that Slutski is simply slandering Lenin—the Bolsheviki? The slander must be exposed, but not made the subject of discussion.

Every Bolshevik who really is a Bolshevik knows that long before the war, from about 1903-1904 onwards, at the time when the group of the Bolsheviki formed in Russia and the Left was first heard of in German social democracy, Lenin was pursuing a line directed towards a breach, a split, with the opportunists amongst us, in the Social Democratic Labor Party of Russia, and in the II International, especially in German social democracy. Every Bolshevik knows that it was precisely for this reason that the Bolsheviki had already gained even then (1903-1905) in the ranks of the opportunists of the II International the honorable title of "splitters" and "disorganizers." But what could Lenin do, what could the Bolsheviki do, when the Left social democrats in the II International, and above all among the German social democrats, proved a weak and impotent group, inadequately organized, lacking in ideological equipment, and afraid even to utter such words as "breach" or "split"? It could not be demanded of Lenin, of the Bolsheviki,

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that they in Russia should undertake to carry out the split for the Lefts in the Western parties. And this apart from the fact that organizational and ideological weakness have been characteristic features of Left social democracy not merely in the period before the war. This negative trait is well known to have remained characteristic of the Left in the period after the war. We all know the estimate given of German Left social democracy in Lenin's well-known article: *On the Junius pamphlet*" **) published in October, 1916, or more than two years after the beginning of the war, in which Lenin criticized a large number of serious political errors committed by the Left social democrats in Germany, and referred to the:

> ". . . Weaknesses of *all* German left-wingers, who are entangled on all sides by the vile network of Kautskyist hypocrisy, of pendantry, of 'peaceful attitude' towards the opportunists," and in which he states that "Junius has not freed himself completely from the influence of the German social democrats, even the left-wingers, who are afraid to say the revolutionary slogans right out." ***

Of all the groups in the II International, the Russian Bolsheviki were at that time the sole group capable, thanks to its organizational experience and ideological equipment, of undertaking anything definite towards a direct breach, towards splitting off from all the opportunists in Russian social democracy. Had the Slutskis attempted—not to prove that Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviki did not exert their utmost efforts to organize the split from the opportunists (Plechanov, Martov, Dan) and to drive away the centrists (Trotsky and the other adherents of the August bloc)—but had simply assumed this, then it would be possible to dispute about the Bolshevism of Lenin, the Bolshevism of the Bolsheviki. But this is precisely the point, that the Slutskis do not venture to make even the slightest mention of such a fantastic assumption. They do not venture on this because they are aware that the well-known facts of the resolute policy of a breach with the opportunists of every shade, carried out by the Russian Bolsheviki (1904 to 1912) furnish a flat contradiction to such an assumption. They do not venture it because they know very well that the next day they would find them in the pillory.

But here the question arises: Could the Russian Bolsheviki accomplish the split from their opportunists and centrist conciliators long before the imperialist war (1904-1912), without at the same time pursuing a line towards a breach, towards the splitting off from the

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** Junius: Rosa Luxemburg.

*** Complete works. Vol. XIX, pp. 227, 228: *On the Junius Pamphlet.*

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opportunists and centrists of the II International? Who can doubt that the Russian Bolsheviki regarded their policy towards the opportunists and centrists as an example to be followed by the Left in Western Europe? Who can doubt that the Russian Bolsheviki urged the Left social democrats in Western Europe, especially the left-wingers of German social democracy, to carry out the breach, to split away from their opportunists and centrists? It is not the fault of Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviki that the Left social democrats in Western Europe proved not to be ripe to follow in the footsteps of the Russian Bolsteviki.

2. Slutski charges Lenin and the Bolsheviki with not having supported the German social democratic left-wingers resolutely and irrevocably, but only with serious reservations, and of being prevented by fractional considerations from according unreserved support. You want to discuss against this deceitful and utterly false charge? What is there to discuss about it? Is it not clear that Slutski is performing a maneuver, and is endeavoring by this charge against Lenin and the Bolsheviki to conceal the actual gaps in the position of the left-wingers in Germany? Is it not clear that the Bolsheviki could not support the Left in Germany, which was vacillating continually between Bolshevism and Menshevism, without making *serious reservations*, without subjecting the errors committed to *serious criticism*, if they did *not* want to *betray* the working class and its revolution? Fraudulent maneuvers must be exposed, but not made the subject of discussion.

It is perfectly true that the Bolsheviki gave their support to the Left social democrats in Germany only with certain serious reservations, and criticized their semi-Menshevist errors. But for this they deserve appreciation and not reproach.

Is there anyone who doubts this?

Let us turn to the best known facts of history.

(a) In 1903 serious differences of opinion arose between the Bolsheviki and Mensheviki in Russia on the question of membership of the Party. The Bolsheviki, in formulating the conditions of membership of the Party, aimed at setting up an organizational barrier to prevent the Party being flooded with non-proletarian elements. The danger of such an inundation was more than imminent at that time in view of the bourgeois-democratic character of the Russian revolution. The Russian Mensheviki adopted the opposite standpoint, opening the doors of the Party to the non-proletarian elements. In view of the importance of the questions of the Russian revolution for the world revolutionary movement, the social democrats of Western Europe resolved to intervene in the matter. The Left social democrats in Germany, Parvus and Rosa Luxemburg, the then

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leaders of the left-wingers, too, intervened. And what happened? Both took sides against the Bolsheviki. The Bolsheviki were accused of ultra-centralism and Blanquist tendencies. Subsequently these superficial and petty bourgeois epithets were seized upon by the Mensheviki and spread all over the world.

(b) In 1905 differences of opinion arose between the Bolsheviki and Mensheviki in Russia on the character of the Russian revolution. The Bolsheviki stood for the idea of the alliance of the working class with the peasantry under the hegemony of the proletariat. The Bolsheviki maintained that matters must be urged forward to a democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry, in order to pass immediately from the bourgeois-democratic revolution to the socialist revolution, the support of the village poor being secured. The Mensheviki in Russia rejected the idea of the hegemony of the proletariat in the bourgeois-democratic revolution; they preferred the policy of an understanding with the liberal bourgeoisie to the policy of the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, and declared the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry to be a reactionary Blanquist scheme contradicting the evolution of bourgeois revolution. What was the attitude adopted in this dispute by the left-wingers of social democracy in Germany, Parvus and Rosa Luxemburg? They drew up a utopian and semi-Menshevist scheme of permanent revolution (a distorted representation of the Marxist conception of the revolution) permeated by the Menshevist rejection of the policy of the alliance of the working class and the peasantry, and opposed this to the Bolshevist conception of the revolutionary democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Later on this semi-Menshevist idea of the permanent revolution was taken up by Trotsky (and in part by Martov) and employed as a weapon in the struggle against Leninism.

(c) During the period preceding the war, one of the most urgent questions confronting the parties of the II International was the national and colonial question, the question of the oppressed nations and the colonies, the question of the liberation of the subject peoples and colonies, the question of the methods of struggle against imperialism, the question of the way to bring about the overthrow of imperialism. In order to promote the development of the proletarian revolution and the encircling of imperialism, the Bolsheviki proposed the policy of supporting the emancipation movement of the oppressed nations and colonies on the basis of the right of self-determination of the nations, and promulgated the idea of the united front between the proletarian revolution in the advanced countries and the revolutionary liberation movement of the colonial peoples

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and the oppressed countries. The opportunists of all countries, the social chauvinists and social imperialists of all countries did not hesitate to attack the Bolsheviki for this reason. The Bolsheviki were treated like mad dogs. And what point of view was adopted by the Left social democrats in Western Europe? They developed a semi-Menshevist theory of imperialism, rejecting the principle of the right of self-determination of the nations according to the Marxist conception (including separation and the formation of independent states), repelled the thesis of the serious revolutionary significance of the liberation movement in the colonies and oppressed countries, the thesis of the possibility of the united front between the proletarian revolution and the national emancipation movement, and opposed the whole of this semi-Menshevist hodge-podge, representing an entire underestimation of the national and colonial question, to the Marxist idea represented by the Bolsheviki. It will be remembered that later on Trotsky seized upon this semi-Menshevist mixture and employed it as a weapon in the fight against Leninism.

These are the errors, known to all, of the Left social democrats in Germany.

I need not refer to the other errors of the German Left, which were severely criticized by Lenin in articles dealing with them.

Nor do I refer to the errors which were committed by them in the estimate formed of the policy of the Bolsheviki in the period of the October upheaval.

Do these errors of the German Left, which are part of the history of the pre-war period, not bear witness that the Left social democrats, in spite of their radicalism, had not yet freed themselves from their Menshevist trappings?

Admittedly, the left-wingers in Germany did more than commit grave errors. Their record contains great and truly revolutionary deeds. I refer to their numerous admirable actions and their revolutionary attitude in questions of inner politics, especially in election struggles, in questions of parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles, of the general strike, of war, of the revolution in 1905 in Russia, etc. It was precisely for this reason that the Bolsheviki reckoned upon them as left-wingers and supported them, urging them forward. It cannot, however, wipe out the fact, nor does it wipe it out, that at the same time the Left social democrats in Germany had many serious political and theoretical faults, that they had not yet discarded the Menshevist ballast, and therefore stood in need of serious criticism from the Bolsheviki.

Judge for yourselves whether Lenin and the Bolsheviki could support the Left social democrats in the West *without serious reservations, without serious criticism* of these errors, if they were not

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themselves to betray the interests of the working class, the interests of the revolution, of Communism?

Is it not clear that Slutski, who casts reproaches on Lenin and the Bolsheviki where he would have only praise to bestow were he a Bolshevik—has unmasked himself completely as a half Menshevik, a masked Trotsky?

Slutski assumes that Lenin and the Bolsheviki, when forming their estimate of the Left in the West, proceeded from considerations arising in connection with their own fraction, and that in consequence the Russian Bolsheviki sacrificed the great cause of the international revolution to the interests of their fraction. It is scarcely necessary to prove that nothing could be viler or more despicable than such an imputation. Nothing could be more despicable, for even the greatest fools among the Mensheviki are beginning to realize that the Russian revolution is not the private affair of the Russians, but on the contrary, the affair of the working class of the whole world, the affair of the proletarian world revolution. There could be nothing more despicable, for even the professional calumniators in the II International are beginning to perceive that the consistent internationalism of the Bolsheviki, revolutionary to the uttermost, is an example of proletarian internationalism to the workers of the whole world.

Truly the Russian Bolsheviki placed in the foreground the fundamental questions of the Russian revolution, such as the question of the Party, of the attitude of the Marxists to the bourgeois-democratic revolution, the alliance between the working class and the peasantry, the hegemony of the proletariat, the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary struggles, the general strike, the transition of the bourgeois democratic revolution into the socialist, the dictatorship of the proletariat, imperialism, the self-determination of the nations, the liberation movement among the oppressed nations and colonies, the policy in support of this movement, etc. They put these questions as the touchstone testing the revolutionary steadfastness of the Left social democrats of the West. Had they the right to do this? Certainly they had. They had not only the right, but it was their duty. It was their duty, for these questions were at the same time the fundamental questions of the world revolution, to whose tasks the Bolsheviki subordinated their policy and their tactics. It was their duty, for it is solely by means of such issues that the really revolutionary spirit of this or that group of the II International could be tested. It may well be asked where the "fractional spirit" of the Russian Bolsheviki is to be found in this, and what this had to do with "fractional considerations"?

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As early as 1902 Lenin wrote in his pamphlet, *What Is to Be Done?*:

> "History now sets us an urgent task, more revolutionary than any of the urgent tasks of the proletariat of any other country. The accomplishment of this task, the destruction of the most powerful support of not only European reaction, but (as we can already state) of Asiatic reaction, would make the Russian proletariat the vanguard of the international revolutionary proletariat." *

30 years have passed since the publication of the pamphlet "What Is to be Done." No one will venture to deny that in this period events have entirely confirmed Lenin's words. And does this not mean that the Russian revolution was (and remains) the focus of the world revolution, and that the fundamental questions of the Russian revolution were (and still are) at the same time the fundamental questions of the world revolution?

Is it not clear that it was only by means of such fundamental issues that the revolutionary spirit of the Left social democrats of the West could be really tested?

Is it not clear that people who can regard such questions as "fractional" reveal themselves as entirely trivial and degenerate?

3. Slutzki asserts there have not been found sufficient official documents in proof of a determined and irreconcilable struggle on the part of Lenin (of the Bolsheviki) against centrism. He operates with this bureaucratic thesis as if it were an irrefutable argument in support of the assertion that therefore Lenin (the Bolsheviki) underestimated the danger of centrism in the Second International. And you undertake to enter into a discussion against this nonsense, against this fraudulent hair-splitting? But what is there to be discussed here? Is it not evident enough without discussion that Slutzki is simply endeavoring, with this talk about documents, to conceal the scantiness and falseness of his so-called point of view?

Slutzki regards the existing Party documents as insufficient. Why? How does he substantiate this position? Do not those documents, known to all, referring to the line of the Second International and to the line of the inner Party struggle in Russian social democracy, suffice to show with perfect clarity the revolutionary irreconcilable attitude of Lenin and the Bolsheviki in their struggle against the opportunists and centrists? Does Slutzki know these documents at all? What further documents does he require?

Let us assume that besides the documents already known, a number of other documents had been found—resolutions, let us say,

* Complete works. Vol. IV. 2nd demi-vol., p. 156.

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passed by the Bolsheviki, and again emphasizing the necessity of destroying centrism. Would the existence of such purely paper documents suffice to demonstrate the really revolutionary spirit and the real irreconcilability of the Bolsheviki towards centrism? Who, except hopeless bureaucrats, relies upon mere paper documents? Who, except archive burrowers, fails to grasp that the Party and the leaders must be tested first of all by their *deeds*, and not only by their declarations? History has known not a few socialists who have been very willing to sign all sorts of revolutionary resolutions, in order to protect themselves from intrusive critics. But this has not meant that they have *put these resolutions into practice*. And history has again known not a few socialists who, foaming with excitement, have demanded the most revolutionary actions from the workers' parties of *other* countries. But this has not meant that they have not capitulated, in their *own* Party or in their *own* country, to their *own* opportunists, to their *own* bourgeoisie. Was this not the reason why Lenin taught us not to judge the revolutionary parties, tendencies, and leaders, by their declarations and resolutions, *but by their deeds*?

Is it not clear that Slutzki, if he really wanted to test the irreconcilability of Lenin and the Bolsheviki in their attitude towards centrism, should not have based his article upon single documents and two or three of private letters, but should have taken as the basis of his examination the deeds, the history, and the actions of the Bolsheviki? Were there then no opportunists and centrists among the Russian social democrats? Did the Bolsheviki not carry on a determined and irreconcilable struggle against all these currents? Were these currents not allied, ideologically and organizationally, with the opportunists and centrists in the West?

Did the Bolsheviki not shatter the opportunists and centrists as they had never been shattered by any other Left group in the world? How is it possible to maintain, in the face of all this, that Lenin and the Bolsheviki under-estimated the danger of centrism? Why does Slutzki ignore these facts, which are of decisive importance for a characterization of the Bolsheviki? Why has be preferred the least reliable method of all, to rummage among accidentally collected papers?

Because the more reliable method of testing the Bolshevik on the basis of their deeds would have at once completely upset Slutzki's point of view.

Because a test of the Bolsheviki on the basis of their deeds would have shown that the Bolsheviki are the *sole* revolutionary organization in the world who have actually completely defeated the opportunists and centrists and driven them out of the Party.

Because a reference to the actual deeds and the actual history

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of the Bolsheviki would have shown that Slutzki's teachers, the Trotzkyists, formed the leading and main group promoting centrism in Russia, and created a special organization for the purpose, the August bloc.

Because a test of the Bolsheviki on the basis of their deeds would have unmasked Slutzki, once and for all, as a falsifier of the history of our Party, anxious to veil the centrist nature of the Trotzkyism of the pre-war period by slanderously accusing Lenin and the Bolsheviki of having under-estimated the danger of centrism.

This, comrades editors, is the truth about Slutzki and his article.

You see that it was an error on the part of the editorial board to permit a discussion with a falsifier of the history of our Party.

What has caused these editors to adopt this wrong line? I believe the cause to be that rotten liberalism which at present has spread to a certain extent among a section of the Bolsheviki. There are some Bolsheviki who are of the opinion that Trotzkyism is a fraction of communism, and though it is erroneous, and commits foolish and even anti-Soviet acts, still it is a fraction of communism. Hence a certain liberalism towards the Trotzkyists and towards people of a Trotzkyist tendency. It need scarcely be proved that such a conception of Trotzkyism is profoundly false and dangerous. In actual fact Trotzkyism has long since ceased to be a fraction of communism. In actual fact Trotzkyism is the advance troop of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie which is waging the fight against communism, against the Soviet power, and against the building up of socialism in the Soviet Union.

Who supplied the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie with intellectual weapons against Bolshevism in the form of the thesis of the impossibility of building up Socialism in our country, in the form of the thesis on the inevitability of the degeneration of the Bolsheviki, etc.? This weapon was supplied by Trotzkyism. It cannot be regarded as mere accident that all anti-Soviet groups in the Soviet Union, in their attempt to justify the inevitability of he struggle against the Soviet Union, have referred to the well known theses of Trotzkyism on the impossibility of building up Socialism in our country, on the inevitability of the degeneration of the Soviet Power, on the probability of the return to capitalism.

Who supplied the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the Soviet Union with the tactical weapon of attempts at open action against the Soviet power? This weapon was supplied to them by the Trotzkyists, who endeavored to organize anti-Soviet demonstrations in Moscow and Leningrad on November 7, 1928. It is a fact that the anti-Soviet actions of the Trotzkyists encouraged the

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bourgeoisie, and gave impetus to the sabotage work of the bourgeois specialists.

Who supplied the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie with the organizational weapon in the form of attempts to form underground anti-Soviet organizations? This weapon was supplied to them by the Trotzkyists, who organized an anti-Bolshevist illegal group. It is a fact that the underground anti-Soviet work of the Trotzkyists facilitated the organization of the anti-Soviet groups in the Soviet Union.

Trotzkyism is the advance troop of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie.

Therefore liberalism towards Trotzkyism, however crushed and masked this Trotzkyism may be, is a stupidity bordering on crime, on a betrayal of the working class.

Therefore the attempts being made by some "literates" and "historians" to smuggle this camouflaged Trotzkyist trash into our literature must be resolutely frustrated by the Bolsheviki.

Therefore no literary discussion can be permitted with the Trotzkyist smugglers.

It appears to me that the "historians" and "literates" of the Trotzkyist smuggler type are endeavoring at present to pursue their Trotzkyist activities along two lines.

Firstly, they are striving to prove that during the period before the war Lenin under-estimated the danger of centrism, and leave it to the inexperienced reader to infer that consequently Lenin was not yet a genuine revolutionist at that time, and that he became one only after the war, after he had "re-equipped" himself with Trotzky's help. Slutzki may be regarded as a typical representative of smugglers of this description, and we have seen from the above that Slutzki and his consorts are not worth much attention.

Secondly, they are striving to prove that Lenin did not understand the necessity of the transition of the bourgeois-democratic revolution into the socialist revolution, and the inexperienced reader is again left to infer that consequently Lenin was not yet a genuine Bolshevik at that time, and that he did not grasp the necessity of this transition till after the war, when he had "re-equipped" himself with Trotzky's aid. A typical representative of smugglers of this description is Volosevitch, the author of "A Course on the History of the C.P.S.U." It is true, that as early as 1905 Lenin wrote that "*we shall commence at once, in accordance with our powers, the powers of the class conscious and organized proletariat, to pass on from the democratic revolution to the socialist revolution,*" that "*we are for the uninterrupted revolution,*" that "*we shall not stop half way.*" It is true that innumerable facts and documents of a

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similar character may be found in Lenin's writings. But what does Volosevitch trouble about the facts of the life and work of Lenin? Volosevitch and his like, having first given themselves a Bolshevist veneer, write for the purpose of smuggling through their anti-Leninist contraband goods, of spreading lies on the Bolsheviki, and of falsifying the history of the Bolshevist Party.

You see, that the Volosevitches are worth as much as the Slutzkis.

These are the "ways and crossways" of the Trotzkyist smugglers.

You will realize for yourselves that it is not your work as editors to facilitate the smuggling activities of such "historians" to placing at their disposal a platform from which they may debate.

In my opinion, it is the task of the editors to raise the question of the history of Bolshevism to the necessary level, to lead the study of the history of our Party into a scientific Bolshevist path, and to keep a sharper watch on the Trotzkyist and other falsifiers of the history of our Party, whereby the mask must be systematically torn from their faces.

This is the more necessary as even some of our historians—here I refer to historians without inverted commas, Bolshevist historians belonging to our Party—are not free from faults which are grist to the mill of the Slutzkis and Volosevitches. Unfortunately even Comrade Yaroslavsky does not form any exception, and his books on the history of the C.P.S.U., in spite of their excellent points, contain a number of faults of a fundamental and historical character.

With communist greetings,

J. STALIN.

SOCIAL DEMAGOGIC PHRASES AND THEIR CLASS CONTENT

Kautsky adopts a typical petty-bourgeois attitude when he expresses the opinion that the mere utterance of a slogan makes a difference. The history of bourgeois democracy pricks this bubble. Bourgeois democrats have voiced, and continue to voice, all possible slogans, this being one of the ways in which they humbug the people. The vital matter is that we should test the sincerity of those who utter slogans, should compare their deeds with their words, that we should not be content with idealist and cheap-jack phraseology, but should find how much actual class content lies behind the words. (*Works of Lenin*, Russian edition, Vol. VI.)

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The Irish Rebellion in 1916

By V. L. LENIN

INTRODUCTION

The article by Lenin on the Irish Uprising *published below has not only great historical interest (showing why Lenin—the Bolsheviki—supported the Left Social Democrats in Germany only with serious reservations) but is of exceptional importance at the present time for all parties of the Communist International. Especially is this article of interest for the Communist Party of the U.S.A. which is confronted with the task of organizing and leading the revolutionary movement of the Negro masses for national liberation.*

In this article Lenin answers Karl Radek who, representing the group of Polish and German Left Social Democrats, denied the Leninist conception of the role of national revolutionary movements in the proletarian revolution on the ground that the "struggle for the non-existent right of self-determination" was illusory. In opposition to the thesis of the Bolsheviki the Lefts put forth the anti-Marxian idea of a "pure" proletarian revolution which they conceived as a general uprising of the proletariat all over the world, unsupported by national revolutionary movement of the subject nations and colonies. Against the conception of "pure" proletarian revolution, Lenin in his article The Revolutionary Proletariat and the Right of Nations to National Self-Determination *wrote: "We must connect the revolutionary struggle for Socialism with a revolutionary program on the national question. . . . We demand the freedom of self-determination, i.e., independence, i.e., the freedom of separation for the oppressed nations, not because we dream of an economically atomized world nor because we cherish the idea of small states, but on the contrary, because we are for large states and for a coming closer, even a fusion of nations, but on a truly democratic, truly internationalist basis, which is unthinkable without the freedom of separation."*

In the United States the negation of the right of self-determination for the Negroes was expressed in a pure and simple social-imperialist manner by the renegades from Communism, Lovestone and Company, and formed an integral part of the whole system of opportunist views propagated by the latter. But even after the expulsion of the opportunist elements from the Party and after the

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orientation of the Party to the correct Bolshevik line on the Negro question there still remains in some sections of the Party certain unclarity and underestimation of the importance of the slogan of the right of self-determination for the Negroes in the South. Therefore a thorough study of the Leninist conception of the national question as expressed in this article is of tremendous value, not only for the raising of the theoretical level of our Party, but also for overcoming opportunism in practice in our struggle for Negro rights.—EDITORS.

OUR theses were written prior to this rebellion which should serve as material for checking up the correctness of our theoretical views.

The views of the opponents of self-determination lead to the conclusion that the life energies of small nations, oppressed by imperialism, are already exhausted, that they are not capable of playing any role of active opposition to imperialism, that support of their purely nationalistic aims would lead to nowhere, etc. The experience of the imperialist war 1914-1916 supplies a factual repudiation of such and similar conclusions.

The war proved to be the epoch of crisis for western European nations, for imperialism as a whole. Every crisis discards what is merely conditional, tears off the outside wrappings, throws off everything that has outlived its usefulness, reveals the deepest inner moving springs and forces. And what did it reveal from the point of view of the movement of oppressed nations? In the colonies—a whole series of attempts at rebellions, which, of course, the oppressing nations were trying by all means to hide with the aid of military censorship. But, not withstanding this, it is well known that the English have revenged themselves in a beastly manner on their rebellious Indian troops in Singapore; that there were attempts at rebellion in the French Annam (see *Nashe Slovo*) and in the German Cameroon (see the pamphlet of Junius); that in Europe, on the one hand, Ireland rebelled and was pacified by means of executions by the "freedom-loving" Englishmen, who did not dare to draft the Irish into general military service; and, on the other hand, the Austrian government sentenced to death deputies of the Czech *Seim* for "treason" and entire Czech military divisions were shot for the same crime.

It stands to reason the above list is by no means complete. But at the same time it proves that the flickering fires of national uprisings, in connection with the crisis of imperialism, did flare up both in Europe and in the colonies. Sympathies and antipathies did reveal themselves despite all threats and measures of repression.

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And this at a time when the crisis of imperialism was as yet very far from having reached the highest point of its development. The might of the imperialist bourgeoisie was as yet intact, not undermined (war to the point of exhaustion might lead to this, but as yet had not done so); the proletarian movements within the imperialist nations were as yet decidedly weak. But what will happen at a time when the war will have led to complete exhaustion, or when under the blows of proletarian struggle, the power of the bourgeoisie even of only one nation will begin to shake as the power of czarism did in 1905?

In the newspaper *Berner Tagwacht*, the organ of the Zimmerwaldists, including some of the left wingers, there appeared May 9, 1916, an article with the initials K. R., dealing with the Irish rebellion, under the title *The Swan Song*. The Irish rebellion was declared to be a mere *putsch*, because "the Irish question was an agrarian question," the peasants were pacified with reforms, the nationalist movement had become "purely" city, petty bourgeois movement which, despite the big noise it was making, had little special significance.

No wonder that this evaluation so monstrous in its doctrinairism and pedantry, coincided with an evaluation given by the Russian national-liberal, the cadet, Mr. A. Kulisher (*Retch*, 1916, No. 102, April 15), who also called the rebellion the "Dublin *Putsch*."

It is to be hoped that, according to the saying, "there is no evil without some good in it," that many comrades who do not realize into what a swamp they are slipping in denying "self-determination" and taking up a contemptuous attitude towards the national movements of small nations, will have their eyes opened by this "accidental" similarity of evaluation by a representative of the imperialist bourgeoisie and a social-democrat!

About a *putsch* in the scientific sense of the word one may speak only in case an attempt at rebellion did not reveal anything else in back of it but a small group of plotters and absurd maniacs, did not call forth any sympathy from the masses. The Irish national movement with centuries of history behind it, having passed through various stages and combinations of class interests, found its expression among other things in the mass Irish National Congress in America (*Vorwarts*, March 20, 1916) that had declared itself for the independence of Ireland, in street battles engaged in by a part of the city petty bourgeoisie together with *a part of the workers* after a long drawn out mass agitation, demonstrations, suppressions of newspapers, etc. Whoever calls such an uprising a *putsch* is either a bitter reactionary or a doctrinaire, hopelessly incapable of imagining a social revolution as a living phenomena.

For to think that a social revolution is possible without rebellions

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of small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary explosions of a part of the small bourgeoisie *with all its prejudices*, without a movement of the non-class conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against feudal, ecclesiastical, monarchial, national, etc. oppression—to think that way is to *give up the social revolution*. Presumably we must only set up in one place a military force that will declare, "we are for socialism," and at another place another force that will say, "we are for imperialism," and we will have the social revolution! Only one with such a ridiculous pedantic viewpoint would find it possible to label the Irish rebellion as a *putsch*.

Whoever is looking for a "pure" social revolution, will never live to see it. He is a revolutionist in words only, but does not understand the real revolution.

The Russian revolution of 1905 was a bourgeois-democratic revolution. It was made up of a series of battles of *all* dissatisfied classes, groups and elements of the population. Among them there were masses with the wildest kind of prejudices, with the most confused and fantastic objects of struggle, there were some small groups financed by the Japanese, there were speculators, adventurers, etc. *Objectively* the movement of the masses was breaking up czarism and was clearing the way for democracy and therefore the class conscious workers were directing it.

The Socialist revolution in Europe *cannot* be anything else but an application of a mass struggle of every element of oppressed and dissatisfied. A part of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably take part in it—without such participation *no mass struggle* and *no* revolution of *any kind* is possible—and just as inevitably will they carry into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will be attacking *capital* and the conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of the superficially incoherent mass struggle of various elements, voices and colors, will find a way to unify and direct it, to conquer power, take hold of the banks, expropriate the trusts, so hateful to all (though for different reasons) and carry out other measures of dictatorship, that in their total effect will result in the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and in the victory of Socialism which however, will not succeed at once in cleansing away all petty bourgeois dross.

The social democracy we read in the Polish thesis (1. 4) "should utilize the struggle of the young colonial bourgeoisie, directed against European imperialism, *in order to sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe.*" (Emphasis by the authors.)

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Is it not clear that it is wholly impermissible in this connection to contrast Europe with the colonies? The struggle of oppressed *nations in Europe,* developing into uprisings and street battles, reaching violation of the iron discipline of the army, and declaration of state tof siege, that struggle *will produce a vastly sharper revolutionary crisis in Europe* than the much further developed, much more advanced rebellion in a distant colony. A blow of equal strength when struck against the power of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by a rebellion in Ireland will have a hundred times greater political effect than if it occurred in Asia or Africa.

Not long ago the French chauvinist press informed us that the eightieth number of the illegal journal *Free Belgium* made its appearance. Of course the French chauvinist press very often lies, but this information resembles the truth. At a time when the chauvinist and Kautskian German social-democracy failed to establish for itself during the course of years of war a independent press and slavishly submitting to the yoke of military censorship (only the left radical elements, to their credit, were issuing pamphlets and proclamations without the censor), at that time an oppressed cultured nation replied to the unheard of cruelties of military oppression by the creation of an organ of revolutionary protest! Such are the dialectics of history, that small nations, helpless as an independent factor in a struggle with imperialism, are nevertheless able to play a role as one of the ferments as a kind of bacilla that help to bring upon the scene the *real* power against imperialism—the socialist proletariat.

All the general army headquarters are making strenuous efforts during the present war to utilize each and every kind of national and revolutionary movement in the camp of their enemies, the Germans—the Irish rebellion, the French—the Czech movement, etc. And they act correctly from their own point of view. You cannot take seriously the very serious problem of war, without utilizing even the least weakness of your adversary without grasping every chance, especially, because it is impossible to know beforehand, at what particular movement and with what particular force, here or there, one or another powder magazine will explode. We would be a sorry lot of revolutionists indeed, if we did not know how to utilize, during the great liberation struggle of the proletariat for Socialism, *each and every* movement of the people against isolated grievances brought about by imperialism, to utilize them in the interest of a further sharpening and spreading of the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to proclaim and to repeat in thousands of ways that we are *against* any kind of national oppression, and, on the other hand, to stigmatize as a *putsch* the heroic rising of the most mobile and intellectual section of some classes of the op-

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pressed nations against its oppression, then, indeed, we would have reduced ourselves to the same dull level of the Kautskians.

The misfortune of the Irish consisted in the fact that their rebellion did not happen to be timed well—the European rebellion of the proletariat had *not yet ripened*. Capitalism is not constructed in such a harmonious fashion, that all the different mainsprings of rebellion shall spontaneously and without failures and defeats, flow at once into one common torrent. On the contrary, the very discord in point of time, kind and place of those rebellions is the guarantee of the breadth and depth of the general movement; only through the experience of revolutionary movements are untimely, fractional, disunited, and therefore unsuccessful, will the masses gain experience, will they learn, gather strength, will they recognize their true leaders, the socialist proletariat, and will thereby prepare the general onslaught, just as isolated strikes, demonstrations, city and national, flare-ups within the army, explosions among the peasantry, etc., prepared the general onslaught in the year 1905.

THE RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION

The center of gravity of the internationalist education of the workers in oppressing countries must take the form of insisting upon the right of oppressed countries to secede and set up for themselves. Short of this, there is no internationalism. We can and should regard as an imperialist and a scoundrel every socialist in an oppressing country who fails to carry on propaganda of this kind. The right to secede is axiomatic, even though, before the coming of socialism, there may not be more than one case in a thousand where the right can be enforced. (*Works of Lenin*, Russian edition, Vol. XIX.)

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Hegel

HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEATH OF HEGEL

Born 1770, *Died November* 14, 1831

By K. A. WITTFOGEL (*Berlin*)

I. HEGEL AND THE BOURGEOIS REVOLUTION

THE hundredth anniversary of the death of Hegel provides the bourgeoisie with an occasion, by means of noisy celebrations, to claim the great philosopher as their own. All this outcry is thoroughly false and deceitful. The bourgeoisie are not only unable to develop Hegel further scientifically, but they are not even capable of really grasping Hegel as he was in his own time.

Hegel's life and work received its greatest stimulus from the bourgeois revolution, as realized in the Great French revolution. Engels rightly emphasizes that Hegel "always speaks of the French revolution with the greatest enthusiasm." In Hegel's earlier writings there is clearly expressed his hatred of the feudal absolutist oppression. He there attacks with bitter words the "rulers in the Church and the State." The intellectual revolution is not the political revolution, but it prepares the way for it. ("The great revolutions which stand out in history must be preceded by a silent, secret revolution in the spirit of the 'age.'") He praised the Republican virtues. Christianity he characterized as a shameful, contemptible religion, whose representatives are filled with "a mistaken holy zeal for the glory of God, sanctimonious pride and haughtiness, and a God-devoted lethargy. . . ." (Quoted from *The Positiveness of the Christian Religion.*)

In the second phase of his development Hegel became a follower of Napoleon, *i.e.*, that later phase of the revolution which, as Marx said, caused bourgeois society to break forth in powerful living streams. At that time he considered the revolution, also for Germany, as a welcome necessity. In his *Phenomenology*, published in 1807, Hegel wrote: "It is, moreover, not difficult to see that our time is a time of birth and of transition to a new period. The Spirit has broken with the present world of its existence, and manifestations and is about to thrust it into the past, and is now working at its transformation. True it is never at rest, but is in ever progressing movement."

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After the downfall of Napoleon, Hegel gave himself up to resignation. But his resignation assumed such a form, that he could now affirm the bourgeois revolution that *was*. The German bourgeoisie had not captured power. A few concessions had been granted them under the pressure of Napoleon. The bulk of the progressive big bourgeoisie of Germany now applied themselves to developing *capitalist production*. Hegel, as the only bourgeois philosopher, grasped important laws of motion of modern capitalism the contradictory nature of which he presented with all the hardness of his dialectics (Philosophy of Law). He now drew the political conclusion that a revolution as in France is not necessary in Germany. Luther, according to Hegel, had already done the chief work in the reformation. What was still lacking had come about under the pressure of the "French," or would now arise by means of reforms. Idealism permitted Hegel to shift the conception of revolution into the "world of ideas." Hegel's original conception of revolution was thereby weakened and watered down. It was this idealistic turn, on the other hand, which permitted the older Hegel to become a reformist Conservative, without declaring himself in principle against the revolution.

II. THE IDEALISTIC DIALECTICIAN

Hegel attempted with the methods of idealistic dialectics to grasp Nature, History and human consciousness. It is this method whose *idealistic* side Marx, Engels and Lenin sharply rejected as faulty; its *dialectical* side however, has at the same time been recognized as the greatest achievement of bourgeois philosophy and developed further along materialistic lines. *Marx* characterizes the merits of Hegel in his preface to the second edition of the first volume of *Capital*, where he says: "The mystification which dialectics suffers at the hands of Hegel, in no way prevented him from being *the first to present its general forms of movement in a comprehensive and conscious manner*. With him it was upside down. One must turn it right way up in order to discover the rational kernel in the mystical husk."

Wherein, however, lies the rational kernel? What is the nature of dialectics? The Hegelian dialectics as Lenin declared, is the "most comprehensive, rich in content and profound doctrine of evolution." In it we obtain a presentation of the "actual course of development of Nature and Society (a course often consummated in leaps and bounds, catastrophes, revolutions)." (Lenin: *Karl Marx*.)

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III. DIALECTICS OF REVOLUTION

Hegel's presentation of *historical* revolutions is in its central point mystically obscured by his idealism. He did not realize the materialistic connection of social phenomena, although he conceived these as a unity—this in itself was a great advance—nor did he understand the class struggles as the form in which the historical process takes place. The great world-historical individual who, it is true, does not act on his own account but is conditioned by his "time" and acts in accordance with the social development, is regarded by Hegel as the bearer of revolution. In spite of the idealistic mode of outlook, which considers world history as an act proceeding from the *Weltgeist*, and in spite of Hegel's dialectic of history, which considers the great man as the medium of the *Weltgeist*, it can be clearly recognized that *the transition* in no way bears a peaceful, reformist character. "It is," said Hegel, "the hidden spirit which knocks at the door of the Present, which is still underground and has not yet developed into an actual existence and wishes to emerge, to whom *the present world is only a husk which encloses in it a core other than that which belongs to the husk. . . .*" In the transition there is then manifested the new spirit which bursts the old husk. "This, however, is connected with a *waning, a shattering, a destruction of the preceding mode of reality.*" (Philosophy of history.) We do not find these words of Hegel quoted at any of the recent Hegel celebrations held by the bourgeoisie.

IV. THE COMMENCEMENT OF A NEW ORDER

The bourgeoisie has also "forgotten" another aspect of Hegel's dialectics of transition. This aspect is those statements which Hegel made regarding the commencement of a new order. Here also Hegel, within the limits of his idealism, presented in a striking manner the "general forms of motion." The old and the new order are essentially different. They must be regarded as "outwardly completely antagonistic." (We can note in this connection how rationalization, piece-work, premiums, have a fundamentally different meaning under capitalism and under socialism.

The new appears first in a general, so to speak, abstract form. "*This new is just as little a perfect reality as a newly-born child,*" declared Hegel, "*and it is essential not to overlook this.* The conception reached of the Whole is no more the Whole itself than a building is finished when its foundation has been laid." Thus the first immaturity of the young order is no argument against the order itself.

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V. THE BOURGEOIS AND THE PROLETARIAN HEIRS OF HEGEL

Such and similar remarks of Hegel on the dialectics of transition are to be found in a great number of his writings. With regard to Hegel one must never forget the idealistic feature contained in his philosophy. Hegel's idealism characterizes the limits of recognition to which he, the ideologist of the bourgeoisie of Germany which was particularly backward at that time, was subjected. That the contradictions of *capitalism* lead from this to *Socialism*—this Hegel failed to see. He showed his limited discernment by causing his idealistically constructed system (which, however, was actually influenced by the real world) to end with a sham constitutional corporative State and with his own philosophy of absolute idealism. A dialectical world-process which ends in a rigid form is however no longer dialectic. The *revolutionary side* of the Hegelian philosophy, the dialectic is here, as in many other places, "choked by the overwhelming *conservative* side" (Engels).

The idealistic-theological overgrowths had to be destroyed if Hegel's magnificent doctrine of development was to be raised to the level of pure science. Bourgeois society was the less able to achieve this the more capitalist society developed. Only a class which was interested not in the *existence* of capitalist society, but in its *disappearance*, in its being *superceded* by a higher order of social life could solve this task. This class was *the proletariat.* Standing upon this basis, Marx and Engels by revolutionary criticism, "abolished" Hegel's idealistic dilectics by setting up the *materialist* dialectics, and thereby first gave it its full scientific power and effectiveness.

The bourgeoisie received from Hegel quite another "heritage." Today the bourgeoisie have no use for Hegel's *revolutionary* ideas. It is Hegel *the ideologist, the theologian* with whom the bourgeoisie express their sympathy. *Fascism* before all seeks in Hegel's idealism the metaphysical sanction for a reactionary repressive State, which according to Hegel the theologian is proclaimed as a kingdom on earth, as the reality of the moral idea.

The two *Hegel Congresses* held in 1930 and 1931 plainly revealed the fascist intentions of the bourgeois. "Hegel renaissance"; not only because Mussolini's philosophers played a prominent part in them; not only because the Soviet investigators of Hegel's philosophy were prevented from presenting the Marxist-Leninist further development of the Hegelian dialectics. In the reports there was also unmistakably expressed the political tendency of the bourgeois interpretation of Hegel. The bourgeoisie can claim to be the heirs of Hegel only by *destroying* what was *scientifically* great

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in him, by stressing his pre-scientific theological features and presenting them as comprising the whole of Hegel's teachings.

The real heir of Hegel is Marxism-Leninism. The theory of the revolutionary proletariat has raised the tremendous *scientific* Hegelian conceptions to a higher level. By freeing them from the theological outgrowths it has merged them with the other roots of Marxism into *dialectical materialism.*

It is a symptom of the complete historical decay of the bourgeoisie that they are not even able to take over the progressive heritage of the great champion of their own class. And it is an equally important indication of the world-historical mission of the proletariat that it incorporates in the young, creative, comprehensive socialist culture all the all the cultural achievements which the bourgeoisie produced in the period of its ascendency.

TURNING IMPERIALIST WAR INTO CIVIL WAR

Turning imperialist war into civil war is the only correct proletarian slogan. It is indicated by the experience of the Commune. It was outlined by the Basle resolution (1912) and it follows from all the conditions of an imperialist war among highly developed bourgeois countries. However difficult such transformation may appear at one time or another, Socialists will never relinquish systematic, insistent, unflinching work in this direction once the war has become a fact. (*War and the Second International,* by V. I. Lenin, published by International Publishers.)

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The Increased Danger of War Against the U.S.S.R. and the Tasks of the Communists

Due to the acutely sharpening danger of intervention against the U.S.S.R., and the tasks this imposes upon the Communist Parties and the working classes of all countries, we are reprinting below (with slight abbreviation) the resolution of the XI Plenum of the E.C.C.I. on the war danger.—EDITORS.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR ARMED INTERVENTION AGAINST THE USSR

THE danger of armed intervention against the U. S. S. R. has become a *direct danger for the whole of the world proletariat.* The relations between the capitalist and Socialist systems have entered a new *historical phase.* The proletariat of the U.S.S.R., in the period of extreme acuteness of the post-war crisis of capitalism, relying on the peasants in the collective farms and the poor peasants in alliance with the middle peasants, with the assistance of the revolutionary proletariat of the capitalist world, is already *completing the foundations of Socialism on one-sixth of the globe.* The Leninist policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and of the Central Committee, and the enthusiasm of the working class and of the broad masses of toiling peasants in the work of building up Socialism, have finally destroyed all the hopes of the capitalist world and the "forecasts" of the Trotskyists regarding the degeneration of Soviet economy into capitalism.

In these conditions, international imperialism again puts forward the question of solving the historical conflict between capitalism and Socialism by means of war. The successes of the *Five-Year Plan* of Socialist construction in town and country, which the masses of the workers contrast with the growing crisis and disintegration of capitalism, have in themselves become a danger to capitalism. The improvement in the standard of living of the workers in the U. S. S. R., on the one hand, and the unheard-of suffering, mass unemployment, want and fascist tyrrany which has increased out of all proportion in capitalist countries, owing to the world economic crisis of capitalism, on the other hand, strikingly illustrate the difference between the two world systems—Socialism and capitalism. The effort of capitalism to solve the crisis at the expense of the proletariat and the working peasants of all countries is leading to a

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general capitalist offensive on all fronts against the toiling masses of the capitalist countries and *simultaneously* and inseparably linked up with it, to the acceleration of war preparations against the U. S. S. R.

The growing world economic crisis and the struggle among the imperialist powers for markets intensify all imperialist antagonisms and cause them to become exceptionally acute. The danger of armed conflicts between the imperialist powers is growing. But the growing antagonism of interests between the imperialists does not diminish, but, on the contrary, increases the danger of a war of intervention against the U. S. S. R.

In the conflict between these two world systems—capitalism and Socialism, which are diametrically opposed in principle—the Second and Amsterdam Internationals are definitely on the side of capitalism in the work of preparing for intervention.

The French bourgeoisie—the chief organizers of the anti-Soviet war—have already created a number of political and military alliances for the purpose of encircling the U. S. S. R. (Poland-Rumania-Finland-the States of the Little Entente). The same aim of encircling the U. S. S. R. is pursued in the Pan-Europe scheme and also in the plans for coalition of the so-called agrarian countries of Southeastern Europe, etc. (Rumania, Hungary, Yugo-Slavia, Bulgaria, etc.) The *revision* and *supplementing* of the statutes and powers of the League of Nations also has the purpose of preparing the ground for openly organizing a crusade against the U. S. S. R.

The feverish increase of *armaments*, the renewal and *extension of military alliances*, and the preparation of joint plans for mobilization by the French General Staff, is putting the countries on the Western border of the U. S. S. R. in a state of military preparedness. During the last five years a new war industry has been created in these countries under the hegemony of the French and British war industry; while countries of the "second line" (Czecho-Slovakia, Sweden) have been converted into regular arsenals for the anti-Soviet war.

Strategic railroad lines are feverishly being laid down (Poland, Rumania, Yugo-Slavia), and naval harbors, new lines of fortification, military bridges, are being constructed, all in accordance with the plan of the attack on the U.S.S.R. Simultaneously with the feverish growth in the numerical strength and equipment of the standing armies, an extensive system of military training of the general population is being developed through the medium of fascist sport and similar organizations. The French General Staff, and its touring generals, are drawing up plans for the united anti-

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Soviet operations of the armies of the States bordering on the U. S. S. R., under a single command. The remnants of the counter-revolutionary white guard armies of Kolchak, Denikin and Wrangel are continually financed by French imperialism and are maintained on a war footing so that they can be utilized—as was shown by the conflict on the Chinese-Eastern Railway—as an integral part of the interventionist armies that are to fight against the U.S.S.R. Fascist coups like those in Poland, Jugo-Slavia, Rumania and Finland are directly or indirectly the result of the influence of French and British imperialism and are closely connected with direct war preparations against the U. S. S. R.

The Moscow trial of the Industrial Party, the wrecking and espionage agency of French imperialism, glaringly exposed in the most concrete manner possible the direct military preparations against the U. S. S. R. For the purpose of drawing up plans and directing military operations against the U. S. S. R., the French General Staff set up an International Commission, which included representatives of the British and Polish General Staffs. The supervision of wrecking and espionage work was conducted by the agents of the French General Staff. The date for military operations had already been fixed for 1930 or at least, 1931.

In the U. S. A. the plans for military intervention against the U. S. S. R. were actively supported by the influential imperialist groups of Hoover.

The Hoover group set up a special organization camouflaged by the name of the "Federal Farm Board," headed by Legge, Director of Supplies for the Allied armies during the imperialist war. This Federal Farm Board purchased stocks of provisions to the value of half a billion dollars for the purpose of supplying the interventionist armies. These supplies were purchased with extraordinary haste for delivery at the date fixed by the French General Staff for the commencement of military intervention, and were held in readiness in the ports on the Atlantic seaboard.

As part of the plan of war preparations, and as the direct preliminary to armed intervention, there has already been organized an *economic war against the U. S. S. R.* One wave of slanderous campiagns regularly succeeds another—the campaign around the alleged "abduction of General Koutepov" was followed by the campaign against the alleged "religious persecution" in the U. S. S. R.; this was followed by the campaign against "dumping" and soon after by the most stupid and infamous of all the campaigns, the campaign conducted by the exploiters of wage slaves against free Socialist labor under the pretext of combatting alleged "forced labor" in the U. S. S. R. These despicable campaigns which were

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followed up with concrete measures of economic war against the U. S. S. R. in Europe and America clearly and openly pursue the aim of disrupting the *Five-Year Plan* of Socialist construction in the U. S. S. R. War already has been declared against Soviet exports by means of special laws prohibiting imports of Soviet goods and the license system on imports in France; the decree against "dumping" in Belgium; the decree against the import of products of "convict labor" of the U. S. S. R. in U. S. A. and Canada. The leading capitalist groups of the principal imperialist countries (chiefly France and Great Britain) are openly proclaiming the slogan of the *international organization of this economic war*, the slogan of breaking relations with the U. S. S. R.

II. THE ROLE OF SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE PREPARATION FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION AGAINST THE U. S. S. R.

In this criminal work for the organization of the economic blockade and the preparation for military intervention against the U. S. S. R., *the Second International and the Social Democratic parties play a direct and leading role for which they bear full responsibility.* These "Socialist" and Social Democratic parties, who participated in previous armed interventions against the U .S. S. R., have been completely transformed into the most important instruments of the imperialist bourgeoisie for the ideological and political preparation of the blockade and the counter-revolutionary war against the U. S. S. R. In order to deceive the masses of toilers in capitalist countries they spread the silliest legends and vilest slanders, sometimes invented by themselves and sometimes borrowed from the arsenal of the bourgeoisie, about the "collapse" of the Soviet regime in the U. S. S. R. In order to belittle in the eyes of the toiling masses of capitalist countries, the tremendous achievements of the workers and the toiling peasants in the U. S. S. R. in the work of construction, the victorious advance of Socialism in town and country, the Social Democrats invented the legend about "Red Imperialism." Singing the praises of the pacifism of the League of Nations they try to persuade the Social Democratic workers to believe that "war is threatening from the East." From time to time they tour the States bordering on the U. S. S. R. in order to stir up a campaign of slander against the proletarian government (Vandervelde, Boncour, Abramovitch, Dan, etc.).

The parties of social fascism openly take the most direct part in carrying through the policy of armaments, blockade and intervention. The strongest party of the Second International, *the Social Democratic Party of Germany*, the partner of German militarism in concluding the Brest Peace, and in the occupation and plun-

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der of the Ukraine, the representatives of which already in 1919 took part in leading the bands of Bermont and Von der Goltz in their attacks on the Soviet Republic, is the most active of all the parties in Germany which are organizing the anti-Soviet front. The Social Democrats, Breitscheidt and Severing, are the initiators and the most active advocates of the policy of a *bloc* between imperialist Germany and the organizers of the international imperialist anti-Soviet front, reactionary military France, Poincare, Tardieu and Briand. Breitscheidt, Wels and Hilferding gave the Russian Menshevik wreckers and interventionists instructions how to prepare the ground for intervention.

The French Social Democrats are the defenders of the most aggressive anti-Soviet policy of French imperialism. Boncour, the author of the law for the militarization of the whole population of France, and Renaudel, the reporter for the Air Fleet Budget Commission in the French Parliament, are the pioneers of French imperialism and militarism. The French Socialists, under the leadership of Leon Blum and Albert Thomas, systematically carried out for the French government preliminary work for preparing its vassal States on the borders of the U. S. S. R. for an anti-Soviet war, while day after day they lauded with hymns of praise the "pacifist" instigator of war against the U. S. S. R., Mons. Briand.

The leaders of the Polish Socialist Party in 1918-19 rejected the peace offers of the Soviet Government and took an active part in Pilsudski's campaigns against Vilna and Kiev. During the war against the U. S. S. R. in 1920 they, occupying leading positions in the Polish Government, supported the murderous gangs of Petlura and Balakovitch.

The Polish Socialist Party is now, as in the past, a strong support for the militarism of Pilsudski, which is directed against the U. S. S. R. This party votes for the military budgets, recruits workers for the semi-military fascist organizations, approves of all the anti-Soviet acts of provocation of Polish fascism and takes an active part in all the anti-Soviet campaigns.

The British Labor Government, which was compelled, under the pressure of the masses of the workers to stop sabotaging the resumption of diplomatic relations with the U. S. S. R., is now persistently pursuing the policy of British imperialism, and is establishing the closest contacts with the French Government in order to organize the encirclement of the U. S. S. R.

The leaders of the American Federation of Labor excel the bourgeoisie in their anti-Soviet campaign, and jointly with Fish and company are openly calling for an economic blockade of the U. S. S. R. The Socialist Party of America openly supports the anti-Soviet pro-

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paganda of the American Federation of Labor and of Fish and company.

The Czecho-Slovakian Social Democrats, with greater zeal than that displayed by all other parties of Czecho-Slovakia, support the military alliance with French imperialism. This party is the most active advocate of the policy which is converting Czecho-Slovakia into the arsenal and munition dump for Poland and Rumania against the U. S. S. R.

The Belgian Social Democrats, the advocates of the policy of alliance with bourgeois France, openly demand in parliament war against Soviet imports.

Austrian Social Democracy makes hypocritical declarations against military intervention but in fact takes an active part in all the slanderous anti-Soviet campaigns conducted by the bourgeoisie and the Second International, the purpose of which is to prepare the ground for the military intervention of international imperialism against the land of the proletarian dictatorship.

The trial of the Russian Mensheviks, who were working, as Vandervelde declared, in "close contact" with the Second International, and whose work the Second International was "closely watching," revealed that the Second International, jointly with the French General Staff and the Russian white guard emigrant organization in Paris (Torgprom), organized the Russian Mensheviks as an agency for wrecking work, with the aim of preparing for military intervention. The emigrant organization of the Russian Mensheviks, the so-called Foreign Delegation of the Mensheviks, is directly supported by the Second International as a wrecking agency for creating an economic crisis in, and preparing for armed intervention against the U. S. S. R. The Menshevik organization in the U. S. S. R. was closely connected with the bourgeois organization of wreckers and spies, the so-called "Industrial Party," and through the latter with the French General Staff. The trial demonstrated with great clearness that the verbal declarations made by the Second International against intervention are nothing more or less than a mask to deceive the workers and to conceal the real interventionist policy of the Second International. For, as the Mensheviks, Gromann and Sukhanov, declared: "It is impossible to prepare war against the U. S. S. R. without hiding these preparations from the proletarian masses."

III. THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE PREPARATIONS FOR MILITARY INTERVENTION

The fact that, in spite of the feverish preparations made by international imperialism and the Social Democratic parties of the Second

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International, war has not broken out, is due to the antagonism in the camp of the imperialists, and particularly to the readiness of the proletarian masses in the capitalist countries and colonial countries to support the proletarian dictatorship in the U. S. S. R., and to the consistent policy of peace pursued by the Worker and Peasant Government of the U. S. S. R.

In spite of the slanderous campaigns of the bourgeoisie and the Social Democratic parties regarding the policy of the C. P. S. U., the enormous achievements of the worker and peasant masses in the U. S. S. R., more and more win the sympathy of the toiling masses of the imperialist and colonial countries towards the U. S. S. R. The number of workers and peasants who are prepared to defend the U. S. S. R. actively and revolutionarily as their only Fatherland, is undoubtedly growing and far exceeds the political sphere of influence of the Communist Parties. It is beyond doubt also that the work of the Communist International in defense of the U. S. S. R., has become a most important factor for the preservation of peace, a factor which caused the postponement of the imperialist slaughter.

Nevertheless it must be stated that the intensity *of the struggle* against the danger of war and against the danger of intervention against the U. S. S. R. does not at all correspond to the intensity with which the imperialists are preparing for war against the U. S. S. R. The agitation against the war danger is not carried on systematically, and in many cases only from campaign to campaign. The fundamental weakness of the work of the Communists is that the concrete measures being taken in preparation for war in parliamentary commissions, in the imperialist armies and in the war industry, are not sufficiently exposed to the masses. The Communist Parties have not yet learned how to explain to the masses sufficiently clearly the connection that exists between the war preparations of the imperialists and the growth of the exploitation of the oppressed masses. They have not yet learned how to expose by concrete illustrations the fact that social democracy is the support of imperialism in the preparation for counter-revolutionary war against the U. S. S. R.

The XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. most emphatically emphasizes that the activity of the Communist Parties in capitalist countries in the struggle against the war danger, *the activity of every single Communist*, will determine whether the sympathy which the broad masses of workers, the toiling peasants and the nations oppressed by the capitalist countries feel towards the U. S. S. R., will be converted into an active revolutionary struggle against preparations

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for war and the danger of a war of intervention against the U. S. S. R. The duty of every Communist Party, *of every Communist, is to expose the Social Democrats as the agents of the imperialist bourgeoisie in the preparations for military intervention against the working class of the U. S. S. R.; to expose their false pacifism as an organic and integral part of these war preparations, and to win the masses away from them.*

It is the duty of every Communist to expose the fact that the slogans of the bourgeoisie and social pacifists about *"Disarmament," "Reconciliation of Nations," reconciling ex-enemy nations* are not slogans for reconciling nations and securing peace, *but a screen to conceal the front being organized against the U. S. S. R.*

The XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. calls the attention of all Sections of the C. I. to the insufficient *popularization of the teachings of Lenin on war,* and particularly to the *decisions of the VI Congress of the C. I. on the methods of struggle against the war danger* and the danger of military intervention against the U. S. S. R. The slogan of converting imperialist war into civil war against the bourgeoisie at home must be popularized by means of oral and written propaganda among the broad masses of the people. The slogan of converting the war against the toilers of the U. S. S. R. into a war against the bourgeoisie at home, must become the most popular slogan among the vast masses of the workers in the capitalist countries.

The XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. emphasizes the imperative necessity for a determined change in the direction of intensifying the anti-militarist work of the Communist Parties, and especially of the Communist League, as an integral part of the struggle against the danger of war and the menace of intervention.

The XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. reminds all Communists of the instructions of the II Congress laid down by Lenin:

"The duty of spreading Communist ideas includes the special necessity of persistent systematic propaganda among the troops. Wherever this agitation is prohibited by exceptional laws, it must be carried on illegally. Refusal to carry out such work is tantamount to the betrayal of revolutionary duty and is incompatible with membership in the II International." (Thesis on the conditions of admittance into the C. I., adopted at the II Congress of the C. I.)

The XI Plenum of the E. C. C. I. calls upon all Communists, upon all the workers and toilers of all countries to fight against the danger of war and to fight against the menace of military intervention, to defend the land of the first dictatorship of the proletariat, the Fatherland of the proletariat of all countries.

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